FOR THE NEXT HOUR

A Personal Retrospective of
Remembrances and Reflections about
Dallas Theological Seminary

Neil C. Damgaard

Amazon Kindle Direct

Copyright © 2025 Neil Damgaard

All rights reserved

The personalities and events portrayed in this book are given as remembered by the author with some collaboration from fellow students of the time. Any criticism or policy review by the author is not intended.

No part of this book may be reproduced, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without express written permission of the publisher.

ISBN-13: 9798316088263
ISBN-10: 1477123456

Cover design by: Art Painter
Library of Congress Control Number: 2018675309
Printed in the United States of America

Acknowledgements

I am unsure how I came up with the idea to do this little book. It was not the inspiration of a single personality who made an impression on me or challenged me to record my recollections.

However, from the DTS family I can certainly acknowledge the important contributions to me from

Dr. Edwin Blum
Dr. John D. Hannah
Professor Howard G. Hendricks
Professor Sid Buzzell
Dr. Daniel Wallace
Dr. S. Lewis Johnson
Dr. David MacLeod
Mr. Don Regier
Dr. John F. Walvoord
Dr. Bill Lawrence
Dr. Donald Sunukjian
Dr. Paul Meier
Dr. John Reed
Dr. Ron Blue
Dr. Jack Arnold
Chancellor Emeritus Chuck Swindoll
Grounds foreman Richard Martinez

Fellow ThM students Sandy Young, Jim Brinegar, Jack Philippi, Adam Zaslavsky, Bob Boyd, Frank Carmical, Gary Allen, Tom Donworth, David Cottingham, Steve Cottingham, Guy Lumpkin, Everett Kier, Clark Reynolds, Jim Warren, Stephen Strehle and all their wives plus later student Lisa Robonson

Fellow DMin students Rick Dodson and Ted Pricskett

All challenged me in my faith, encouraged me in my trials and affirmed me in my calling.

I am grateful to Janet Taylor of Tennessee for her excellent editorial services, who was the Judicial Assistant to Federal Judge Glen Conrad of the Western District of Virginia in the U.S. Court System.

My wife Renée supported me throughout the searching process, during the work of study and in all the decades of ministry after. I give praise to God for her love, encouragement and good humor! I could have done little ministry without her. Or maybe let's say, none.

Table of Contents

	Page
Preamble	4
Introduction	6
Chapter 1 - How I Heard About DTS	13
Chapter 2 – My First Experiences at DTS	19
Chapter 3 – Second Year at DTS	33
Chapter 4 – Third Year at DTS	37
Chapter 5 – Fourth Year at DTS	44
Chapter 6 – More on my Student Experiences	56
Chapter 7 – Later Post-Academic Experiences	83
Chapter 8 – Issues Not Addressed	109
Chapter 9 – Books by Us	130
Final Thoughts	135

Preamble

It was just a bit magical to walk on to the Dallas Theological Seminary campus for the first time in July of 1976 with our friends **Jim and Lynn Warren**. The City of Dallas, Texas was potent in my psyche. My first ever hearing of the city was at the President's assassination, thirteen years earlier. It is the home of the Cowboys (which I did not like—I'm from Washington DC). It was an early destination for my father, just after he got off the troop ship in New York as the war ended, still in uniform, he stayed for a time at the Adolphus Hotel. The Seminary had produced names which for me were well-known, like John Walvoord, Charles Ryrie, Chuck Swindoll, S. Lewis Johnson, Hal Lindsey and Jack Arnold, all graduates and men I admired. It was hot that day, as July tends to be in Dallas. We walked into Davidson Hall, which was pleasantly cool and quiet and through a large window, out a back stairwell, I viewed a fountain and a blue pool, next to Chafer Chapel.

A large and brand-new academic building loomed across the courtyard, the grass around which was dark brown, almost matching the tan color of the buildings. It was clipped very tight, I noticed. *Strange*, I thought. *Why do they crewcut the lawn*? Later I would learn it was called *scalping*. Jim told me that things are green in Dallas in the summer only deliberately. And very

selectively. I was enchanted. I had heard about the Seminary from several Christian men who had attended it, and spoke of it in an almost legendary tone. And here we were that day. My friend Jim had just completed his first year in the Master of Theology program. He was from northern Virginia, as I was. His wife Lynn was from Moorestown, New Jersey. She had attended Philadelphia College of the Bible, and we had all graduated from Virginia Tech the previous year. Here are the Warrens and Frank Carmical and Renée.

I'm calling this little book *For the Next Hour*, remembering how Professor Howard Hendricks began many of his classes, with the assignment for the following session. It was a classic announcement and I heard this on day one. I can still hear his voice, and from the very beginning it said that we were going to be students first, taken seriously and pushed too. On the first day of class, we were yanked out of any euphoria and launched immediately with academic expectations. DTS would be no different in that way than Harvard, Princeton, Yale, or Cambridge.

Introduction

This book gives review and remembrance of my time at Dallas Theological Seminary as a Master of Theology (ThM) student and twenty-five years later as a Doctor of Ministry student. It might be of interest just to people of the Dallas Seminary community. But it might also attract some interest among those who are considering seminary as an educational path. It might be of some interest to those from other theological schools in comparison. And I hope it holds some relevance just in the telling of my story as an illustration of the pursuit of God's will by two young married people and the achievement of a good training experience for ministry. It was our path and we have been so glad for it.

It was my privilege to enter and complete the Master of Theology program at DTS between 1979 and 1983. Then, after two decades in Pastoral Ministry I entered and completed DTS's Doctor of Ministry program between 2004 and 2008. I had considered other schools for each phase of graduate education, and geographical regions in which to complete them. Dallas served us well in both decisions. This book summarizes some of my experiences there, and the people into whose lives I entered who entered mine, who ministered to me, and prepared me for pastoral work. My wife Renée and I were both greatly blessed by our times at DTS and observed that the Lord was very present in the decisions to attend, in the education received and more importantly in the ways in which we were able to minister His Word and the Gospel in the places to which He subsequently took us.

A few of my seminary professors had known the Seminary's founder, Lewis Sperry Chafer, who had died in 1952, the year in which I was born. He had foreseen a need for a new institution

for teaching the Bible and Christian theology on a graduate level. He founded the school in 1924. That was the year of Howard Hendricks's birth. Fifty-five years later, in 1979, I arrived as a new ThM student. When I arrived, the names of other early faculty members from the school's history remained in the vernacular of the Seminary too: Drs. Walvoord, Lincoln, Nash, Peters, Griffith-Thomas, and S. Lewis Johnson.

Now, I can relate memories and tell stories of men of that second generation who touched my life, instructed my thinking, and matured my perspective. Now also, most of them have gone to be with the Lord. Their wisdom, love of the Word of God, and sense of mission and calling were, to me, very inspiring. And beyond that the Seminary had a non-partisan feel to it; it was not an arrogance but it was a healthy feeling of objectivity and an independence from being defined by one denomination.

There were some loyalties among us: Southern Baptists, members of the Evangelical Free Church of America or the Christian and Missionary Alliance or the Presbyterian Church in America. But more often there was a quiet adhesion to older Plymouth Brethren or Bible Church connections.

For me, coming out of a very close and large church staff environment in Virginia, life around DTS felt more industrial, more corporate. We wore ties. We carried brief cases and parked our vehicles carefully. We spoke with a very careful use of language. We were on alert not to use too much slang. We maintained a presentation that our marriages were happy all the time. We spoke of trusting God and always seeing Him provide when we were in need. The Seminary catalogs always crafted pictures of students in a certain way. We heard about lofty and far-off governing entities, the Board of Visitors and the Board of Incorporate Members. I always felt a little sad for Dr. Walvoord who had to give serious attention to such organizations. Budgeting, scheduling and technical performance were the kinds

of categories I had interacted with working for the US Navy as a management engineering consultant. Surely, we were driven by more than that?

But in its overall philosophy of ministry DTS seemed:

- To be committed to the greatest levels of scholarship without being elitist

- To be inerrantist in understanding of scripture but not committed to a sole English translation of scripture

- To be Calvinistic as were most faculty but not of a separatist or narrowly Reformed party

- To be cognizant of the value of the early ecumenical Councils, warmly appreciative to the Reformation creeds but not focused on any one creed alone as though it might have captured the singular high-water mark of the true Christian faith

- To be committed to the core fundamentals of an evangelical faith but not fundamentalistic

- To be Spirit-filled but not Pentecostal in understanding of scripture

- To be high-church acknowledging but not anti-Catholic or anti-Orthodox

- To be socially sensitive but not tolerant of redefining the Gospel in a mainline way

- To embrace as wide an environment as possible for the exercise of spiritual gifts in ministry by women, married and single

- To be serious about holiness but not overly pietistic, mystical, or "higher life"

- To embrace a hybrid cognizance of each of congregational, episcopal, and presbyterian polities

- To be in fellowship with a large and growing family of like-minded ministries and traditions but not loyal solely to any one

- To genuinely seek students from many nations and cultural backgrounds

- To practice a diversity of conviction for worship styles and music, but on campus practicing a straight-forwardly simple and traditional style

- To always be orderly but not rigid

- To always be dignified but not kill-joy

- To be careful but able to adapt new strategies as the Lord seems to lead

Even at this age I was aware of various biases in Christian leaders. I truly felt like my teachers' agendas were clean--as purely informed of New Testament priorities as I could imagine. The faculty who instructed me seemed to enjoy working with each other and their fellowship together made for good stories that gave the student body of my generation real vision and guidance. These men were a diversity of long-standing and legendary DTS professors, a younger generation of scholars, short-timers of note from other schools, and visiting professors. They were part of a growing seminary having an impact extending far beyond the Dallas Metroplex, Texas, or just the southwest. By the time I began my classes there, Dallas Seminary was known all over the country as a good and respected educational ministry and owner of a godly

and reputable notoriety.

As with any educational institution DTS had its problems, I am sure. But in my years the faculty sat in the Chapel together for services with a warm camaraderie. They respected one another, shared the affection that commends men who profess to know and love the Lord Jesus Christ, and appreciated the diversity of ministries that were now growing. They interacted with the student body and most of us felt like they were reaching to us from a place of genuine kinship with the mission of DTS. Out from Swiss Avenue, into the world with the goal of honoring the God of the Universe and His Son and growing all kinds of outreaches, extensions of the Seminary, and fresh Gospel ministries. In my time it was growing so fast that one could hardly keep track of it all! Even as we gave thanks and praise to God, we could not help but be proud of what we could see was happening.

Most of our student body were young men pursuing the Lord's leading in our time, as our faculty members had in theirs. But now they are mostly all with the Lord. They have gone home to the Savior. Their work was completed. My ThM years were very 1960s and 1970s-designate. Audio visual media was just beginning. Mission organizations and parachurch ministries were still young. It seemed like we were learning of a new one each month. Church growth principles and multiple sites for one church entity were just then new experiments. New degree programs were being developed and there were women in the student body as students in increasing numbers. The largest churches in the Dallas and Fort Worth area were laboratories for new staff ideas, new terminologies, new music ministries and new building designs. The Seminary itself grew substantially in its facilities.

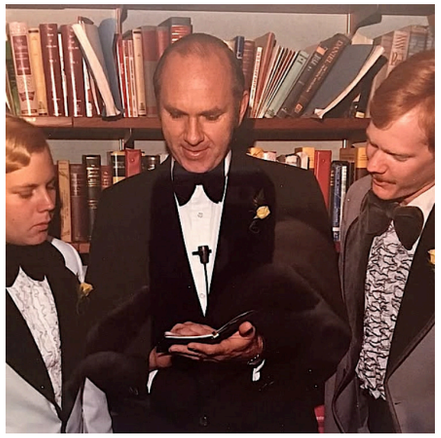
It has been one hundred years since the founding of The Evangelical Theological College in Dallas, Texas, which would soon become the Dallas Theological Seminary. In that century over 16,000 graduates have been sent out who have served in

over ninety-seven nations of the world. DTS has campuses in Dallas, Houston, Washington, DC, and extension sites in Atlanta, Austin, San Antonio, Nashville, Northwest Arkansas, Europe, and Guatemala, and as well, a multilingual online education program. DTS is the largest non-denominational seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and by statistics, the fourth largest in the nation.

Information provided by Association of Theological Schools reports that in the 2023 academic year 20 percent of member schools were Roman Catholic or Orthodox, 34 percent were mainline Protestant, and 46 percent were evangelical. Enrollment numbers in the earliest years were different: 9 percent of seminarians were enrolled at Roman Catholic or Orthodox schools; 19 percent were enrolled at mainline Protestant institutions, and 72 percent were enrolled in evangelical seminaries.

It might seem a small and even embarrassingly trivial topic to ponder, one's own graduate institution, with all the far-reaching issues in debate and reflection today. But DTS has been one of the greatest blessings in my life. I am glad it has grown over the decades, prospered, remained faithful to its original vision, and for the chance that I had to become a very small part of its story.

Chapter 1
How I Heard About DTS



the author and Dr Jack Arnold and Sandy Young (ThM 1986)

I first heard of Dallas Theological Seminary in the summer of 1973 when I met a man named Dr. **Jack Arnold**, who was a pastor and had attended and graduated from DTS. Twice. After that introduction to Dr. Arnold, I was impressed and wanted to encounter him again if I could. He was a good speaker and a man who loved the Bible, and seemed to relate well to college students, of which I was one. As he spoke about the Bible and about how God works there was a confidence that was more than just personality. He communicated with a deep conviction that God works through His written Word and that it would serve us well as young people to learn how God works. Central in that would be our learning the ins and outs of the Bible.

Eventually, Dr. Arnold would perform the wedding ceremony for my wife, Renée and me, welcome me on to the staff of his church for three years in Roanoke, Virginia, oversee my ordination process into the ministry, become my friend and mentor, and receive my ministry to three of his four sons.

Originally from California, Jack was an early convert to Christ with **Bill Bright**, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ. He was then a student at UCLA and a basketball player there for **Coach John Wooden**, and then a Master of Theology (ThM) graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary in 1961. That would be followed by completion of a Doctor of Theology degree (ThD) in 1966 following the planting of a church in Kingsburg, California. At that point he was called to be Pastor of Grace Church in Roanoke, Virginia where he was ministering when I met him in 1973 as a guest speaker for the Navigators ministry at Virginia Tech. He would continue at Grace Church until 1983. His passing away at sixty-nine years old in 2005 was legendary, as he died abruptly in the pulpit while preaching his life verse, “For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.”

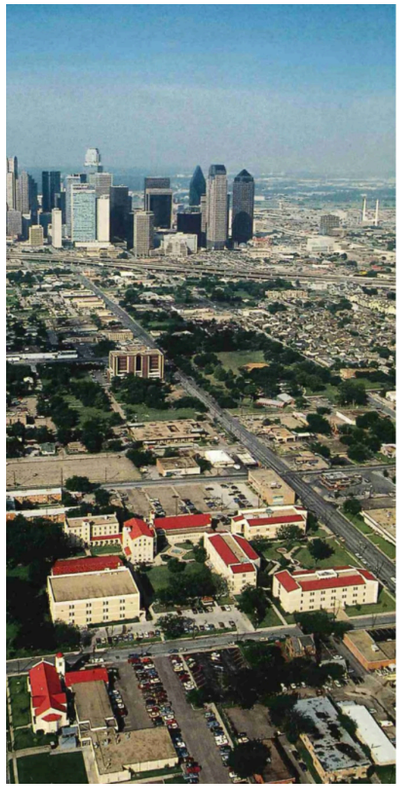
Jack’s impact in my life is hard to estimate. And even though he was a long time away from Dallas by the time I met him, he still carried a DTS air to him. The Seminary’s imprint was always with him and he unconsciously seemed to attract other DTS men to him, too. He had George Gardner and Dan Esau alongside of him in leadership roles, both DTS ThM graduates. Later, an elder in his church in Orlando, Doug Murdock also a DTS graduate. Jack brought together a combination of knowledge and warmth that was very appealing to me. I had been mentored by other men too, but Jack brought something of an *athlete’s* attitude to ministry. At least that was how I responded to his leadership. On his staff, he took me (and other trainees) with him on pastoral visits. He assigned Bible passages, word studies and readings. Jack introduced us to the writers and published scholars of the Reformed tradition. We enjoyed weekly staff meetings each Tuesday morning with prayer for an hour, then a lively discussion on some theological topic. Often that was followed by lunch together. As busy as he was, I never felt like I was being rushed. I certainly was never bored. He could move between different camps of theological thought without cementing his

loyalty to only one. He was Reformed but he never spoke with harshness about his earlier dispensational affiliation; almost like he had a former girlfriend around that he still felt for. He seemed to emulate the attitude of Dr. Chafer. Calvinistic? Yes, of course. Separatistically Reformed? Probably not. I felt like S. Lewis Johnson emulated the same sense of a balanced theology. And the idea of sharing the Gospel with non-Christians was never far from Jack's conversation. There was always a quiet wish to share the Gospel as often and as fully as he could. But he also had idiosyncrasies and felt the stress of leadership too, which would unravel him eventually. In 1982 his ministry fell apart and he was wounded for years. Eventually there would be a great healing and he and his wife, Carol, developed a whole new ministry which they called "EPI", *Equipping Pastors International."* Carol and one of their sons, Brian, continue to engage that work today.

My next chance encounter with someone from Dallas Seminary was when Renée and I were first married, and we briefly attended Barcroft Bible Church in Arlington, Virginia where **Marlin "Butch" Hardman** (1934-2023) was pastor, an excellent pulpit communicator. He was a Piedmont Bible College and Westminster Seminary graduate, not from DTS. But in the fall of 1975 Hardman's church sponsored a video (film) conference on the subject of "The Christian Home" with Bible teacher Dr. Howard G. Hendricks, from Dallas Seminary. Hendricks's effectiveness and *infectiousness* for a Christian view of the home were powerful. Many years later I would learn that Dr. Hendricks personally led Hardman's father to faith in Christ.

Over time Grace Church—really, our home church-- has welcomed or connected with a total of eleven men and women who attended DTS: **Jack Arnold, George Gardner** (who like me would also serve as a Grace Church staff Assistant Pastor), **Sandy Young** (baptized there by Jack Arnold, my best man, lifelong friend and DTS ThM, 1987), **Dan Esau** (ThM 1969, a World War II 82nd Airborne paratrooper who would serve as an elder in the church for

many years), **David Peterson**, LPC (a career licensed professional counselor ThM, 1976)--David pastored the first Richland Bible Fellowship Church in its early days, now Woodcreek Church with a Staff of 25, modeled on Gene Getz's Fellowship Bible Church. Dave was followed there by Dr. Stan Toussaint; **Haje Anderaos** (a geologist from Brazil), **Keith Shubert** (ThM 1971 and PhD 2000) who has given his career to ministry in the Far East with East Asia School of Theology and is still supported by Grace Church along with his wife, **Jeannette** (ThM 1996 and DMin 2001 + PhD 2021 at Biola), **Everett Kier** (ThM, 1981 who would later serve also as Grace Church's Pastor for nine years, and then subsequently serve as Senior Pastor of the Salem Baptist Church for twenty-five years), **James Jennings** (who transferred to Talbot School of Theology in La Mirada, California) and myself (ThM 1983, DMin 2008).



My mother was born the same year as was Dallas Seminary. And when I think of all that was going on in the world into which she arrived in 1924, it gives a certain warmth to the backdrop for the birth of something else beloved for me. It was just six years after the end of the First World War and the same from the time of the flu epidemic. It was five years before the 1929 stock market crash and the beginning of the Depression. And my mother's whole Tennessee upbringing was dominated by a pre-World War II religious environment of Bible studies, preaching, powerful church personalities, and a fiercely independent church polity. But, as I view it, this was a certain fundamentalism with something of a theologically aberrant twist, too. But maintaining an inviolable loyalty to the specific idea of the Gospel demanded by her family and church, she lived a careful young life of honoring the rules and dictates of that community. The rest of American Protestantism and her religious world were not in sync. She was not overly sympathetic to it and in 1942 left her home (and "the Churches of Christ") for Washington DC, where there were thousands of new wartime jobs for women. She was not unfamiliar with the importance of the Bible, Jesus Christ, or church life as a basic community with which to be connected. But her family lived in the context of the Churches of Christ, or also known as "the Restoration movement." And in so many ways, her religious world could hardly be less similar than the seminary in Texas born the same year as she was. My father had no tolerance with any religious organization that played its authority as unassailable. And initially, he could not have been more opposed to my going into the ministry.

In February 1983, near the end of my fourth year, my parents made their one visit to Dallas to see Renée and me. We had just welcomed our newborn daughter, Jocelyn Charis, and they wanted to meet their granddaughter. As I drove them from DFW Airport to their hotel in downtown Dallas, my mother noticed the illuminated sign for Dallas Theological Seminary on Live Oak Street. She asked me, "Is that where you go to school?" I answered "Yes," and she said, "You need to take us by there tomorrow," and I was delighted to consent to give them a tour. When we walked around the campus on the next day, and walked through Mosher Library, my father was impressed with the air of scholasticism. He said, "Maybe this place is not so bad . . ." On that Sunday, they attended church with us at Trinity Fellowship where my favorite DTS professor, Dr. Edwin Blum was preaching from Hebrews 10. He was speaking about the need for Jesus's sacrifice,

> And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until his enemies be made a footstool for his feet. For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified. (Hebrews 10:11-14 *NAS* 1977).

My father carefully listened and later said, "Not a bad sermon," which delighted me. My father really heard the Gospel that day from Dr. Blum. And I could not have been prouder as my parents tasted a Dallas church with my family and me present. Again, I thought of what I learned years later, that Howard Hendricks had once shared the Gospel personally with Marlin Hardman's father, who was the first pastor Renée and I heard in Arlington (Barcroft Bible Church) just before we were married.

Chapter 2

My First Experiences at DTS

I was raised in a Lutheran church in Annandale, Virginia. It was affiliated in those years with the Lutheran Church of America, one of the more modernist and progressive expressions of American Lutheranism. I was baptized as an eight-month-old at Luther Memorial Church in Washington, DC in 1953 and later "confirmed" in 1967 after three years of weekly catechism. I was an acolyte and an enthusiastic youth group participant. But my faith broke loose from its moorings and drifted during high school and early college years. I was interested in philosophy and enjoyed the musings of philosophy's marketers —contemporary musicians. But it was not until 1972, at a Campus Crusade for Christ event, that my faith in Christ abruptly came alive and found a vital anchoring. There, I heard the claims of Christ and the matter of my being a person of faith was not, as it had been in Lutheranism, assumed or secured in some way by my infant baptism. It was based on my personal faith and conviction that Jesus Christ died for my sins, rose from the dead, and was promising to me and to anyone—through the reports of His apostles—eternal life, forgiveness, the gift of His Spirit, and so many other good things. I also came to believe that life includes a plan, some kind of blueprint whose architect is God Himself, driven by His love and providence to bring my life as an individual to a conclusion for His glory and for my joy.

As I graduated from college (Virginia Tech), however, I would not have imagined that within two years I would enter vocational ministry, on a path to attending Dallas Seminary and becoming a local church pastor. I worked as a young engineer for US Navy Sea Systems Command after receiving my BS in 1975. Renée and I were married that fall, too, and we attended Barcroft Bible Church (held in high regard by local DTS affiliated people I knew) and then a tiny independent Baptist church called Charity

Baptist Church in McLean, Virginia (which was Cedarville College affiliated.) I loved engineering but I was hungry for something more spiritual and we were investing several evenings per week in church ministry. I loved that so much and began to explore the idea of finding a way into the ministry.

In the summer of 1976 (for our first vacation) we traveled through Dallas, including our first visit to DTS, to Longview, Texas for a visit to the **Missionary Tech Team.** This was an unusual organization utilizing engineers and architects and partnering together in support of "missions" projects. We were impressed with the vision of that ministry but did not pursue it further. However, it was our first exposure to potential vocational Christian work and this ministry would later appear representatively at DTS Missions Conferences, raising awareness, advertising for support and even doing some recruiting.

I knew Dr. Arnold. I had watched Dr. Hendricks in film form (a film series on *The Christian Home* that was shown at Barcroft Bible Church). I learned of other well-known Bible scholars and teachers from DTS because I was a reader and hungry for good books on Bible study and theology. DTS faculty members had produced no shortage of those!

I learned of the large series of books by Lewis Sperry Chafer called *Systematic Theology* (1948). I read *Things to Come* (1958) by **J. Dwight Pentecost**, *The Rapture Question* (1957) and *Jesus*

Christ Our Lord (1969) by **John Walvoord**. I stumbled upon the Bible study books by Kenneth Wuest (*Wuest's Word Studies*) and loved the idea of at least making an attempt to grasp the value of learning *Kione* Greek. Wuest was a graduate of Moody Bible Institute—not a "Dallas man"--but I read his commentary on Ephesians and Colossians. Somehow, I picked up the idea that an education in biblical studies at DTS would offer me exposure to "the big boys." But I did not apply to Dallas at first.

When I first entered the ministry with Dr. Jack Arnold, as an intern in his church, the program was modeled by Jack on a similar program by a fellow DTS graduate, **Ray Stedman** (ThM, 1950). It was called *The Discovery Center*, at Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, California. The idea was that young people could explore an introduction to professional ministry, under good supervision, *before* investing in seminary. This seemed like a very practical idea. The commitment would be for one year and all applicants would need to raise "support," like missionaries, to be supplemented by a small monthly stipend from the church. One of my Virginia Tech roommates, **Lorenzo Bean** who also was one of my groomsmen, was the first to enter the internship at Grace Church. As he learned local church ministry there, I was in my work as an engineer. invited me to consider becoming a ministry intern too. I would have to leave the good job that I had, relocate to Roanoke and take the risk of trying out vocational ministry with no guarantee that I would be successful.

We prayed about it intensely and although my parents were severely disappointed at my decision, my boss, a senior consultant, and the company president endorsed the idea. They thought I should try it and promised me that if the year's internship proved a bad fit for me, that I could have my job back with them. We took this to be a green light, and I began as a ministry intern in January of 1977. I was promoted from the internship to a staff position as Director of Youth Ministries that August and served with Dr. Arnold (and the rest of his

staff) for two years. In 1978 I began to think about seminary training. With two other staff members, we visited Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, where we spent time with Drs. Cornelius Van Til, Edmund Clowney, and Vern Poythress. We visited Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis and spent time with Dr. Robert Rayburn. We visited the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Chicago and sat in on classes with Drs. Walter Kaiser and Harold O.J. Brown.

All of these were excellent schools. I applied to Westminster but my application was rejected as, I was told, I had no philosophy classes on my engineering undergraduate transcript. This was a disappointment, but Dr. Arnold wrote a recommendation for me to Dallas Seminary, since he had attended there. I received an acceptance and although Westminster reconsidered their rejection and invited me to take a class in philosophy as a remedial measure, we decided to move to Dallas. It was the Lord's hand and His providence. We left Grace Church in a victorious mode, feeling led of the Lord and blessed by that church family to continue preparing for Pastoral Ministry. We packed up our belongings and moved to Dallas, Texas, and on Shadybrook Lane into a very humble apartment complex. It had five swimming pools and in subsequent years that complex was demolished.

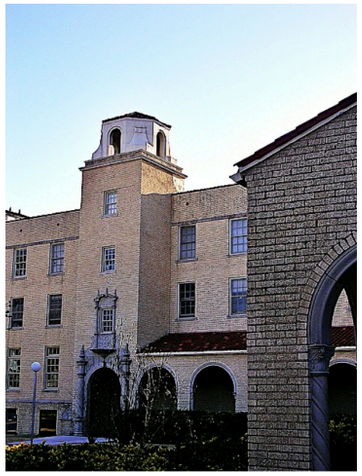
In that first week, on the first day of orientation in the Chapel we heard **Dr. Ellwood Evans** address us in a good spirit. He was an old-timer, a 1932 Wheaton College graduate, then adding the Th.B., from early DTS (Evangelical Theological College) in 1934; then the ThM, now called DTS in 1936; and the ThD in 1946. He had been a pastor in the years 1934 to 1948 and then a Professor of Practical Theology and Assistant Professor of Bible Exposition, a Student Counselor, and by 1979 an aged (69) Dean of Students. He spoke to my entering class, perhaps 200 of us. He encouraged us, warned us of stressful times coming occasionally and that graduate studies could be exhausting, and then told a short anecdote that stayed with me.

> Dr. Evans told us of a phone call he had just received from an area dentist who had customarily offered significant service discounts to seminary students. He said the dentist asked him to announce to the student body that those discounts would no longer be available. He quoted the dentist as saying, "It's no longer fun. Your students that I have known have become very demanding and give off a feeling of entitlement." And this was in 1979! Dr. Evans warned us, right then and there, to disable any demandingness, any sense of entitlement because we were seminary students or ministry aspirants. He exhorted us with words of Jesus and Paul. The cold-water-in-the-face admonishment was one of the best things I ever heard at DTS and it was on the first day of classes!

On my first day of classes, I went to eat my packed lunch in the lunch room which was in the basement of Davidson Hall. Another student, a fourth-year Bible Exposition major, named **Joel Knudsen** (ThM 1980) invited me to eat with him. He was a New Englander and I could not imagine a more foreign place to call home than New England. Joel's job while in seminary, he told me, was as a doorman at a large hotel in North Dallas. Most DTS

students secured part-time jobs to support themselves and their families. If we were married our wives usually worked. Very few of us could afford the luxury of study only. I had just signed on to the grounds crew at the Seminary. Joel was friendly, shared a few stories of his first three years, and then went off into life and I did not see him again the rest of that year nor speak to him again until eleven years later, in 1990 in Massachusetts. We became close friends then and enjoyed being part of a small pastor's fellowship for the next twenty-nine years.

All of us had earned at least a bachelor's degree and so we knew something of how to study. We understood the flow of a semester, the stresses, the ups and downs and the relief of reaching the late spring when we would be done. At least for a while.



In college, over my five years there, I had failed five courses (freshman chemistry, Calculus III, Statistics, Thermodynamics and human factors engineering.) My Fs were not for lack of trying, failing to turn in assignments, skipping class, or insolence to the professors. I worked hard at failing. The disappointment felt with each F stung (no less to my parents when they received the news.) I retook each class—in those days at Virginia Tech one's cumulative average was a straight average. There was no replacing an F with a subsequent grade, no erasure of failures. It was a straight credit average.

A three-credit A balanced a three-credit F to the minimum 2.0 aggregate average for six credits. I earned B's or better with each course retaken but I was behind the eight-ball for my entire college experience. I graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering and Operations Research in 1975 after five years and three straight summers, working construction jobs in between semesters to pay for the replacement classes at my father's insistence. After graduation, I was hired by a Washington consulting firm and worked under contract with Naval Sea Systems Command on the Mk 48 Torpedo and mainly on the CAPTOR ASW mine, my parents alight with pride and happiness—until I resigned to enter the ministry internship at Grace Church in Roanoke, Virginia. I had graduated from college but I was nervous at the prospect of facing two biblical languages and the reputation of a demanding graduate education curriculum, four full years of financial stress, my wife needing to secure adequate employment, and living in a completely unfamiliar part of the nation.

Let me say here that as often as I subsequently heard various people decry the citing of one's degrees or letters after his name, I worked hard at mine and felt at the time and after that the Lord was teaching me, helping me, providentially leading me, and refueling me at every crossroads. It has simply been my community, as it turned out, to reside with academics. In the five decades since my college graduation I have defended an academic lifestyle, the investment needed in money, energy, determination, and stress, and sensed the Lord's calling throughout the whole process. I served on a university staff as Protestant Chaplain and our church—600 yards from a major state university—welcomed many faculty, students, and staff into our fellowship. I cannot help that others did not always honor it. I know what it takes to finish a course of training and education. You have to put in the time, accept setbacks occasionally and trust God throughout the process. And in the end, it is great privilege—in the course of world events and experience—to be able to attend college,

graduate school, and explore higher learning! And through all of that time, I was partnered with my loving and very supportive wife, Renée, without whom I would have completed none of it.

In 1979 there were two basic Master of Theology curricula, 126 graduate hours for graduation. Curriculum A welcomed students entering without Greek and Curriculum B for students entering with Greek. I was in A and the first year had me taking Elements of Greek, Theology Proper and Spiritual Life, Bibliology and Dispensationalism (with **Dr. Charles Ryrie**), Church History to 1500 (with **Dr. Edwin Blum**), Introduction to Bible Study (with **Prof. Howard Hendricks**) and Old Testament Biblical Introduction with **Dr. Walter Bodine**, which came to be known as OTI. That would be followed in the spring by Elements of Greek II, Old Testament History I, Angelology and Anthropology, Church History 1500 to 1800 (with Dr. Blum) and Biblical Introduction II (NTI). Each semester involved fifteen credit hours of study.

Renée immediately found employment with the large Dallas law firm of Strother, Davis, Musselman and Hill, in the Bryan Tower, and would be trained as the firm's first "word processor" utilizing a brand new, $20,000 Micom 2000-word processor unit. The Lord provided this job on referral from another DTS student (**Stephen Strehle**, above, ThM and ThD, also a Virginia Tech-trained chemical engineer), and she excelled at helping the firm, one of the first in Dallas to transition to electronic documentation handling. She proved so successful at mastering the equipment that the firm soon purchased a second Micom and hired a second employee to run it. We also house-

sat on some weekends and joined an unofficial network of fellow seminarians and their wives in making and sharing contacts. We were healthy, young, strong, and motivated and the Lord was blessing. Strehle went on to receive two doctorates, three Master's Degrees, and a full career in philosophy and religion at Liberty University and then at Christopher Newport University.

From the earliest days of our marriage until now, and especially during our DTS years, Renée has said, "God gives us what we need, when we need it." She still says it and we have seen that principle played out in countless scenarios and challenges in our years in ministry. Of course, it is not just true for seminary students or people in vocational ministry. It is a core Christian belief in the goodness and sovereignty of our God which informs us of this reality, which we continue to see played out in our lives.

.One house-sitting experience deserves remembrance. We were referred by another seminary couple to a client for a weekend job. As we drove up to the home in the Highland Park area of Dallas, we could not help but be impressed with its grandeur and elegance. It was a single mom, and two teenage daughters. We were greeted warmly and once inside the home began to notice many pictures of an older man who was not present but apparently had died. We did not know who he was. In a quiet moment, we asked the daughters his identity. Pictures included the gentleman with President Reagan, Coach Tom Landry, and other notable national figures. The daughters told us his name but we still did not know of him. On Saturday morning, we received an angry phone call from the mother firing us and telling us to vacate the premises immediately. She had received a call from a daughter complaining that we did not know the identity of the male and that we should not have inquired. It was the kind of lesson in dealing with the public, as a seminary student, for which we were not prepared but which we never forgot!

Renée's adeptness on the Micom (left) facilitated her being recruited (I do not remember by who) to type and proofread a project for the Pastoral Ministries department, the "5,000 Sermon Illustrations" Project. They were printed on 3x5 cards and boxed and placed for sale to the student body. Renée says now that she wishes we had found an apartment much closer to the DTS campus so that she could have been more involved with the Wives Fellowship. But to the extent that she was able to be connected to other wives from DTS, she enjoyed their friendships.

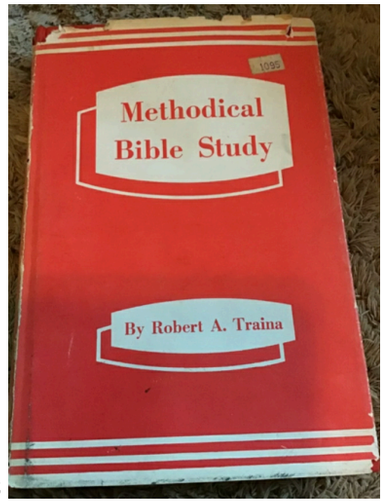
Initially Renée and I attended Believer's Chapel to hear **Dr. S. Lewis Johnson**, with whom I had a good friendship, but we chose to settle in at the new Trinity Fellowship in Richardson under

Dr. Alan Hull

Dr. Edwin Blum which with an interesting quasi-Plymouth Brethren model was very receptive to us and our time in Dallas. Ed Blum and Jack Arnold had known each other during their

Doctor of Theology studies at DTS in the mid-1960s, too. I also became good friends with **Dr. Alan Hull** (above) of that church, a renowned nephrologist. He was Canadian and also a founding church elder in the Trinity Fellowship church.

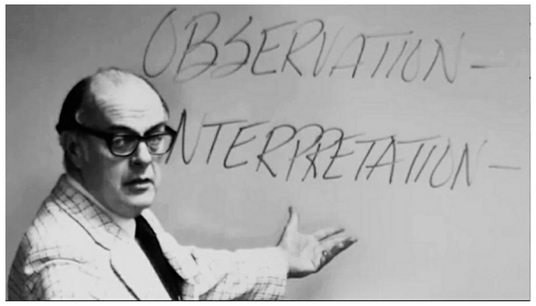
As I remember, it was on the first day of classes that, as we filed into Lamb Auditorium, sat ourselves for the first class with **Professor Howard Hendricks** on Bible Study Methods, he opened class with his classic introduction, "For the next hour . . ." He then gave us our assignment for the next class, in two days: Find and write down fifty observations on Acts 1:8. And on the second day of class as "Prof" announced "for the next hour," he assigned fifty *more* observations on Acts 1:8, which at this point most of us are counting commas, and tabulating how many times any word was repeated (none), and looking hard for anything which could be added to the list. Professor Hendricks then began the great course in basic Bible study methodology, teaching us Observation, Interpretation and Application, and using

Robert Traina's 

book, *Methodical Bible Study* (1957) among many other tools and resources. Professor Hendricks was teaching us to see what is there, before interpreting it, and to see that far more is "there" in a Bible

word, phrase, verse, passage, and chapter than we might initially notice. He also encouraged creative methods of presentation and teaching, going beyond the typical church practices of Christian education. We would learn by experience, if we hadn't known it already, that he was world-famous for his methods of pedagogy. Many of us would take some of those techniques, adapt them to our own personalities and move them into our own ministries for decades. I would subsequently take classes with "Prof" in The Christian Home, Creativity, and Mentoring in Leadership.

In that first semester I had Greek with **Professor Zane Hodges** and Church History with Dr. Edwin Blum. I also had the first of several courses with **Sid Buzzell**, a younger instructor in the Christian Education department and an encouragement to me. I also had **Dr. Charles Ryrie** for Bibliology and Dispensa-tionalism, that famous DTS distinctive only given a part of a three-credit class. Dr. Ryrie was dispassionate about the theological hot-button and very fair and balanced in his presentation. In those days, the Seminary Book Room ran sales, by publisher, several times per semester. When a forthcoming book sale was announced and the titles that would be on sale announced (Baker, Eerdman's, Zondervan, etc.), Dr. Ryrie would go through each list in class and recommend a few titles). This was a practice that we all looked forward to.



Professor Howard G, Hendricks

In my first year I worked part-time for the Seminary grounds crew. It was hard and hot work but the supervisor was an older and wiser Mexican Christian, **Richard Martinez**, and I enjoyed his

leadership. I switched to cleaning swimming pools in my second year (until graduation). Cascade Pool Service was owned by a Seminary graduate and staffed by all-DTS students. The manager was fellow student **Clark Reynolds**, one of the best bosses I ever had on any job. I had been recruited into Cascade by **Jim Warren**, my friend from Virginia Tech days. Jim is still a friend today. He was the first one to suggest to me that I should consider applying to the DTS for ministry preparation.

In those days, students had to remit payment for Seminary tuition and fees at the time of registration. There was no deferment until later nor long-term loans by the Seminary. The Swiss Avenue Bank accommodated students by offering one-year loans, payable monthly for the current year's expenses. I always thought this was an equitable way of handling costs since students would reach graduation debt-free, at least as far as DTS was concerned. In my first year, Master's Degree programs charged a rate of $65 per credit hour. According to the current DTS catalog, the Master's rate is now $700 per credit hour.

There were so many double-doctorates at DTS: Allen Ross, Darrell Bock, Harold Hoehner, Edwin Blum, John Hannah, Eugene Merrill, Donald Sunukjian, and, to my knowledge, one triple-doctorate—Abraham Kuruvilla. I was not in Dallas long—Seminary life made it clear--I realized that I was surrounded by many smart people, far brighter and knowledgeable than me. We had to read, to translate, to pray, to write, to attend class with discipline, earn our keep (and provide for our families), to discuss and subordinate our incoming prejudices to a wider and more mature perspective, to make decisions about ministry and what our major would be, get to know students not all of which we necessarily liked, maintain balance within our own families, to listen and listen well, to receive admonition, exhortation, rebuke and correction, to process our own spiritual formation, to trust God to provide, lead and utilize us, and to defend the moral and spiritual reputation of Dallas Theological Seminary as much as within our ability.

Chapter 3

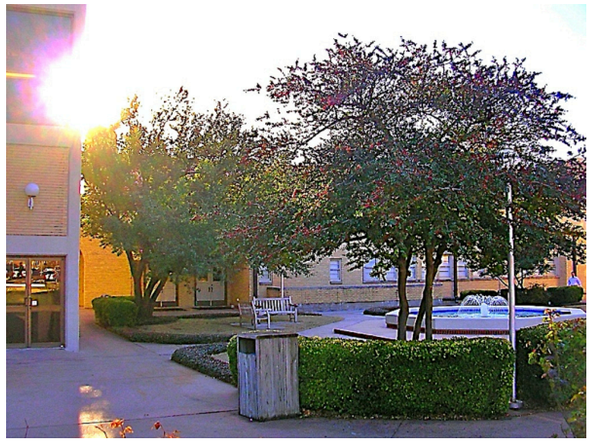
Second Year at DTS

In my second year in the ThM program I took Elements of Hebrew with **Jack Deere**, Greek Grammar and Syntax with **Dr. Dan Wallace** and **Dr. Hall Harris**, Greek Grammar and Sermonic Structure, Old Testament History II, Soteriology and Evangelism (with **Dr. Fred Howe** and **Tony Evans**), Preexilic and Exilic Prophets, Church History 1800-Present (with **Dr. John Hannah**), Educational Program of the Church and Introduction to World Missions (with **Dr. Ron Blue**). It was a full year and the feeling of having made it *out of* first year was a joy. But Hebrew was a real challenge. Taking Hebrew right after lunch motivated me to begin a lifelong love affair with coffee. I loved Church history and declared my major as Historical Theology, placing me closer to Edwin Blum and John Hannah. The department also had instructors **David Puckett** and Ken Sarles. Puckett would be second-reader on my thesis, but I did not have him for any of the required courses. In decades to come, Dr. Blue would come to our church in Massachusetts three times for Missions Conferences and enjoy a great reception and appreciation by our church body.

I also loved the Systematic Theology faculty and felt that this was a real strength at the Seminary. Systematic and Historical theologies were and are such compatible hand-maidens to each other—now they form a single department at the Seminary. But in my years I enjoyed my exposure to great professors in *both* departments and have always appreciated the rich heritage for theological education that was such a part of DTS. If the Seminary was lean in those years on some areas, it was exceptionally strong in languages and theology. It was also an underrated blessing to have access to so much in Mosher Library. On brief excursions to the libraries at Southwestern Baptist Seminary in Fort Worth and Perkins School of Theology (at SMU), I had the feeling that

those institutions were more passionate to present the "brand" of their denominations. DTS had no denomination. Just κήρυξον τὸν λόγον, preach the Word. Mosher Library presented that feeling, from the basement to the upper stacks.

In our second year, Renée and I attended church at Northwest Bible Church in the mornings. Trinity Fellowship was constructing their first building at that time and was holding their services in the facility of Community Bible Chapel for the year, and not until the late afternoon. We still attended there, but wanted a church to attend in the morning. Pastor Jim Rose was an excellent expositor, with a dramatic flair too—sometimes dressing and preaching as biblical characters. Northwest Bible Church also had a unique adult Sunday School approach: the Hesed Class, taken from the Hebrew word חֶסֶד ḥeseḏ, *loyal love*. The class, all young couples, was broken up into tables of eight people (four couples). The morning teaching was rotated between male table leaders, and the couples met outside of church for social events at least once per month. Renée and I loved this approach. It was there that we met Don Eenigenburg and his wife Sue. Don was a DTS student, one of several brothers who attended DTS. Don's brother Larry served on my ordination committee in Roanoke in August 1982. Also in our group was Barbara Hendricks, Professor Hendricks's daughter, and her husband Gene.



It was also in my second year that several friendships with fellow students began. I became friends with another student, **Jim Brinegar**. Also, **Bob Boyd, Stephen** and **David Cottingham**, **Frank Carmical, Tom Donworth,** and **Gary Allen** all bonded together into a permanent fellowship—more about this group later.

It was in my class with Dan Wallace that I first began to learn about textual criticism and the academic world of biblical manuscripts. His teaching notes on Greek grammar were a powerful teaching tool (later published as an 827-page textbook, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*), but more significantly was his start-up of **The Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts**. This scholarly and artistic think-tank is unique in the United States, devoted to the digitization of as many ancient biblical manuscripts as can be found. Photographs of thousands of full autographs, partials, fragments, and their locations are open for viewing on the website. Less intentional perhaps, the Center stands as a powerful witness to the fundamental mission of Dallas Seminary—the integrity, authenticity, and veracity of the written Word of God.

An unusual and highly relevant (and fun) class in second year was Audio Visual Media taught by Don Regier. His background in media production and development brought a unique blessing to those of us who studied presentation with him. It was the days

before PowerPoint, still ten years in the future. We were taught ways to handcraft our overhead transparencies and how to find unusual subject matter, take our own photographs, sometimes use *Kodalith* film (reverse black and white), create and chemically develop 35mm slides and put together multiple projector slide presentations with Kodak Ektagraphic III ATS carousel slide projectors, ganged and synchronized.[1] I used all of this in my church until the arrival of newer, computer-based presentation software. Professor Regier excited us to the possibilities of using media for Bible teaching. The projects were fun, and I utilized some of the projects soon into my ministry. In his classes, Dr. John Hannah also used creative overheads routinely, another example of bringing technology to use in Christian education and teaching.

One more Second Year Note: It was in this time that I and three or four other DTS students began the happy habit of playing billiards after class for an hour or so. We went to Mickey Finn's Pool Hall. It was a stress-management tool, fun and (for me) always humbling. It continued until we all graduated. The word "pool" now had two important applications for me.

Chapter 4

Third Year at DTS

By the third year in the Master of Theology program, I was beginning to imagine what might come after seminary. Where would the Lord take us? We still had no children and we were working hard in the flow of church ministry, working to sustain ourselves and my classwork. Renée was involved with the Wives Ministry and we established a good social structure with a large number of friends.

I looked forward to the Griffith-Thomas Lectures each year, the Missions Conference, and the rapidly growing library which I owned. I was writing for *Ketiv Qere,* a weekly newspaper in those years that was distributed for free to students at Dallas Theological Seminary. Fellow student Rich Milne was editor. *Qere* and *Ketiv* is a system that indicates differences between the written and read forms of the Hebrew Bible. The word *qere* means "what is read" and *ketiv* means "what is written." *Qere* is an orthographic device that indicates how words are pronounced in the Masoretic text of the Hebrew Bible. *Ketiv* indicates the written form of the words as inherited from tradition. Anyway, we all thought it was a great little publication and students were invited to contribute columns. I loved writing, commenting about current events, and the whole process of putting my thoughts into a meaningful essay. I remember writing one piece noting and honoring the death of the famous comedian, film and Vaudeville star Groucho Marx. At the end of fall semester, Second Year, John Lennon was killed in New York City. I wrote for *Ketiv* about that death. It was not a typical evangelical piece and probably a few faculty members were annoyed. I also contributed a long article —one of my papers on the Conference at Savoy (1658)—for a short-lived student publication of theological content, *Studentia et Apologia*. My friend Frank Carmical contributed an erudite and intuitive article reviewing the 1981 film *Time Bandits*.

Early in our third year, Jim Brinegar and I drove over to Tyler, Texas for a free concert with musician, preacher, and prophet-like **Keith Green** (right). His ministry was located there and his songwriting and recording work were beloved to many of us. So many people showed up for this concert that he invited people to come and sit around the piano on the stage with him. But Green was killed in an aircraft accident along with eleven others. Green died on July 28, 1982, when the Robertson STOL-modified Cessna 414 leased by Last Days Ministries crashed after takeoff from the private airstrip located on the LDM property. He was twenty-eight years old.

I also wanted to be ordained to Gospel ministry at the end of my third year. I applied to my home church, Grace Church in Roanoke, still pastored at that time by DTS graduate Jack Arnold. He requested two exegetical papers, a paper on church polity, a paper on my personal philosophy of ministry, and three oral examinations on site, which I underwent in August of 1982. DTS graduate Larry Eenigenburg, who was a pastor in Roanoke also, sat for me with the council of pastors for one of the examinations. I wonder if ordination is even practiced any more in the independent church movement? For me, coming from a Reformed background as well as a mainline upbringing, ordination seemed to be a natural and important step for entering ministry.

DTS did nothing to prepare me for the grilling I would receive from the three oral examinations or even what I should expect to be the required protocols. For this I would depend again on Dr. Jack Arnold. Preceded by preparation and presentation of two exegetical papers (Old and New Testament), my first

oral examination would be with a council of local pastors (that was the easiest exam.) The second by the elders of the church (who were mostly older, World War II-era veterans from the railroad industry—and faintly Presbyterian.) The third oral examination would be with members of the host congregation, an open question-and-answer session that included many difficult, prickly, and often unanswerable interrogations. In fact, the idea and practice of ordination was hardly ever mentioned in classes at DTS. A single class in Pastoral Ministry would come in the fourth year, but little mention—perhaps because Protestants are so diverse in their ordaining, licensing, credentialling practices—was given to the experience of going from being a seminary student to actually being recognized as qualified in the public for ministry.

We had a single class in eschatology. That strikes me with some humor from my perspective now, as the Seminary sometimes was lampooned with the reputation for *only* talking about eschatology in some ministry circles. My eschatology was taught by **S. Craig Glickman** and it was an enjoyable experience. As with most DTS classes at that time, we were provided with a handout of Class Notes for each class session. (I graduated with several hundred pages of Class Notes and kept them all on file until my retirement). Craig Glickman's class on eschatology was accompanied by notes which were very helpful. His approach was to present, fairly and adequately, the various positions of Amillennialism, Covenant theology, Postmillennialism, and the different positions on the Rapture. Then he would detail the premillennial and pretribulational schemes for those doctrines. I do not remember the word dispensationalism mentioned often, as we had taken that half-class earlier in our program (mine with Dr. Ryrie, joined with the study of bibliology). Glickman was younger and equipped with a certain whimsical style that appealed to me and served as something of an antidote to the heavy seriousness I had encountered in other ministries. (Later I would hear Bible scholars like John Gerstner, R.C. Sproul, and others blast away at DTS as a

"boutique shop for shallow theology," but I always remembered Glickman's careful, even-keeled presentations that semester.)

In the spring of the third year, we had one course in Pastoral Psychology and Counseling. It was the only class I took for which I never missed a lecture, and was taught by **Dr. Paul Meier**. I was fascinated by his perspective (a psychiatrist, MD from Duke Medical School), his friendship with another DTS psychiatrist, **Dr. Frank Minirth**, MD (1946-2015), and the completely different nature of the course from all others in the Seminary. It was filled with practical, real-life principles, examples, wise medical experience in healthcare and was a joy to complete. In the plethora of difficult shepherding encounters that I would have in years to come, the Pastoral Psychology Class that I took with Dr. Meier provided insights and tools that I would greatly need and I am still thankful for that class. It didn't answer all questions but it was one resource DTS gave me that I would draw upon often. I could also have used, as my subsequent pastoral experience would unfold, classes in photocopier usage, new facility planning and construction, conflict resolution between leaders, joining or affiliating with larger organizations and how to approach, understand and address questions of pastoral and staff compensation.

One caricatured statement you would hear people parrot, was "You can always tell a Dallas man. You can't tell him much! But you can always tell one…" I always thought that was funny and I heard it even before I arrived in Dallas. But I knew I didn't want to be that caricature. I don't know where the saying came from but I knew this: in those days a student was required to take the MMPI twice, once at the beginning of seminary and again just near the end. And after each test the student would submit to an interview with one of the counseling professors, hopefully with his—the student's--wife in attendance. The MMPI (the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory) was a 600-question survey of a person's psychological stability and profile. For me, and Dr. Meier

said this was true of many applicants to DTS, the "OCD" gauge of the MMPI was high. He evaluated me as being in the 66% percentile. Which he explained was just obsessive enough to make me a good student and that many DTS applicants were in the 90% range. Perhaps that was the "you can always tell a Dallas man" explanation.

Having failed a few classes in undergraduate school tempered me. Then I was 19 and 20 years old and now I was almost 30. I wanted to do poorly in no class at DTS and I achieved good grades in all classes until the summer session of Hebrew Exegesis (2nd year Hebrew). The class itself was wonderful but for my exegetical paper for which I was assigned Psalm 3-- a short one--just 149 words in English, sixty-five in Hebrew and only eight verses. I provided what I thought to be an adequate job of the textual issues, the explanation of the psalm for its problem and David's resolution, and its commentary history. I also briefly gave applicational insights, a thing to be done sparingly in an exegetical paper. I received a D minus. It was a surprising and emotionally crushing result. I still possess the paper and occasionally look at it even now, its red markings and explanatory remarks. I knew then at least, I would never become an Old Testament scholar.

At some point that late summer I shared the result with another professor. He said to me that it was less important how I performed in the languages at DTS, and more important if I gained enough competency to use the languages in the years (and decades) to come in ministry. A simple perspective. Which proved out so well. I did use my Greek and Hebrew then for forty years. I still remember the subtle and elegant love held for the Word of God by linguists Zane Hodges, Jack Deere, Drs. Donald Glenn, Allen Ross, Dan Wallace, Walter Bodine, Eugene Merrill and others in giving me instruction in the languages. Dr. Ross's NOTES on Hebrew Worship were extraordinary. It was not just technical. It was not just historical. We were handling the very words of the

Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, given by inspiration to human authors. My instructors all had a distinct fear of the Lord as they taught us in the Gospel of John, First John, Romans, Ephesians, selected Psalms, Nehemiah, and Daniel in the original tongues.

> The Third Psalm (KJV)
> Morning Prayer of Trust in God.
> A Psalm of David, when he fled from Absalom his son.
>
> LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they that rise up against me.
> Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah.
> But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head.
> I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah.
> I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me.
> I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about.
> Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly.
> Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.

Instruction for the craft of sermon preparation and delivery (homiletics) began in our second year. Practice sermons began at five minutes and ended with the Senior Sermon which was to be no more than twenty minutes. This was great training. For each thirty seconds in over-preaching the prescribed limit in the lab (the instructor held up paddle-cards with remaining time of two minutes, one minute, thirty seconds displayed), the student was docked a half-letter grade. I had Drs. **Ramesh Richard** and **Donald Sunukjian** for this skill building. I would return to Sunukjian in the DMin program for more preaching study, and I would also

have **Dr. Haddon Robinson** in that program, twice.

Here is a sample from the 1979 catalog:

4th

307	Acts and General Epistles	2	206	Exegesis of Romans	3
607	The Pastoral Ministry	2	308	Pauline Epistles and Revelation	3
909	Teaching and Preaching the Bible	3	408	Senior Theology	2
	Thesis or Research Project	2	609	Senior Preaching	1
	Electives	7		Electives	6
		16			15

NOTE: 1. All students are required to elect one course in World Missions.
2. Six hours of Field Education are required (including four prescribed hours and two elective hours), thus bringing the academic hours to a total of 126.

Chapter 5

Fourth Year at DTS

By our fourth year we knew (or at least suspected) that we would make it, arriving at Commencement and then a likely relocation out of the DFW Metroplex to who knows where. DTS has placed graduates (from all its degree programs) in many countries and in all fifty states. Renée and I had some ideas about where we did not want to go, but little idea of where we *did* want to go. In the fall of our fourth year, with Renée pregnant with our first child, we were excited and greatly praying about where we might end up. I was now ordained, and working many hours on the side for Cascade Pool Service. Renée's breadwinning would end midway through that year with the delivery of our child.

One Class in Pastoral Ministry

All non-Pastoral Ministry majors were required to take one class in Pastoral Ministry. Even by the fourth year I knew with no uncertainty that this was the vocation to which I aspired and hoped to engage. I had served on staff at a local church for three years, been ordained to Gospel ministry, was again on staff at an area church and remained with a great sense of call to pastoral work. But still I felt tentative. The one class in pastoral ministry that I took was fun, a sampling of the basic functions of a pastor and yet only a tease, it felt to me. The Seminary chaplain, **Richard Seume**, taught part of the class but most was covered by veteran pastor and Professor Don Sunukjian. Very simple lectures were given on baptisms, funerals, weddings and once again, the preaching office. For the single class on baptism, the assumption was that we would be choosing believer's baptism by immersion as the chosen mode. We practiced baptizing each other, which was very fun and also humorous because some of us kept dropping each other! But we were also learning that while we took our callings very seriously, we were also trying to learn to never take *ourselves* too seriously. Leadership development was covered in

other classes, electives, from the Christian Education department mainly. I took every class on leadership that I could squeeze into my schedule because I had been in ministry just enough to sense that here was where stress might be found most intensely. Team-building, leadership recruitment and training, church discipline issues, affiliations and friendships with other pastors were all topics I felt were needed to be addressed and in which I needed preparation. In this one Pastoral Ministry class which I took, I asked many questions.

Dr. Stanley Toussaint

DTS's curriculum was advertised for its ThM program with a complete exposure to every book in the English Bible. This was accomplished via the classes in Greek and Hebrew exegesis and also through many classes taught by the Bible Exposition department, where I had classes with Elliott Johnson, John Martin, Roy Zuck, and Stanley Toussaint. As had Chaplain Seume, Dr. Toussaint had served in my home state of Virginia, in Richmond, for a number of years. I had friends in my home church who had grown and profited under his ministry there when they were younger.

I had several Bible Exposition classes with Dr. Toussaint and quickly learned that missing his class was a costly forfeiture! Every class was a delight. Dr. Toussaint's warm love for the Word and for his students were the best pastoral example I had in Dallas. Most memorable was that at the end of a class session, he would always close with a list of applications from the passages in which we had been dealing. This served, for me, as a preventative

medicine element from the tendency of an academic institution to handle to Word of God in only a scholastic (and sometimes sterile) fashion. With Dr. Toussaint we always remembered the spiritual life born by and supported by the Word of God.

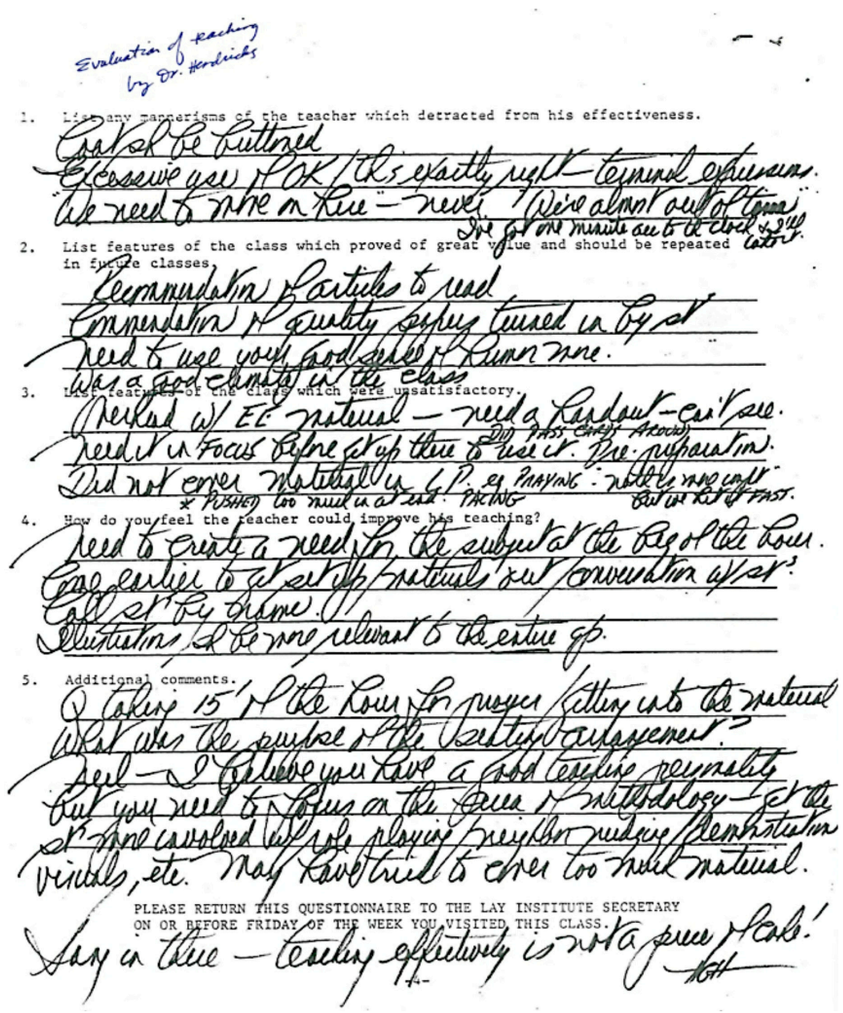
Twenty-five years later, when I graduated in 2008 from the Doctor of Ministry program, and my wife and two grown daughters were present with me for Commencement, we attended a luncheon in which Dr. Toussaint was the guest speaker. I was so happy for my family to experience just a taste of Dr. Toussaint's good ministry.

Lay Institute

In the fall of 1982, my fourth year, I taught in the DTS Lay Institute. My course was "How to Make Disciples," and Renée accompanied me to a class of about twenty students each week. I prepared lessons with overheads, questionnaires, and handouts. About every other week a faculty member would show up, sit in the class, and write up a helpful evaluation on a standard form. The form was thorough and helpful.

One week I had become ill with a stomach virus and decided to tough it out and go to lead my class as usual. I was so ill and I was five minutes late. The faculty member that evening was Professor Howard Hendricks. I did not want to divulge the reason publicly for my tardiness but "Prof" could tell, and graciously and quietly evaluated me with "maybe leave home a bit earlier."

Here is the fourth page of his evaluation.


Evaluation of teaching by Dr. Hendricks

1. List any mannerisms of the teacher which detracted from his effectiveness.
Can't be cluttered
Excessive use of OK / It's exactly right — temporal expressions.
We need to move a little — never / We're almost out of time
Let go one minute on to the clock at 3:40 later.

2. List features of the class which proved of great value and should be repeated in future classes.
Encouragement / articles to read
Encouragement / quality papers turned in by st
need to use your good gifts of humor more.
Was a good variety in the class

3. List features of the class which were unsatisfactory.
Marked w/ EE material — need a handout — can't see.
need to focus before step there & lose it. Pre-preparation.
Did not cover material by 6 P. eg Praying: notebooks
* Pushed too much in a short time. Pacing

4. How do you feel the teacher could improve his teaching?
need to create a need for the subject at the beg of the hour.
Come earlier to get set up / material / our conversation at first.
Call st by name.
Illustrations, & be more relevant to the entire gp.

5. Additional comments.
Taking 15' of the hour for prayer / letting into the material
What was the purpose of the Scripture assignment?
Neil — I believe you have a good teaching personality
but you need to focus on the area of methodology — & the
st more involved in role playing / prayer / judging / demonstration
visuals, etc. May have tried to cover too much material.

PLEASE RETURN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE TO THE LAY INSTITUTE SECRETARY
ON OR BEFORE FRIDAY OF THE WEEK YOU VISITED THIS CLASS.

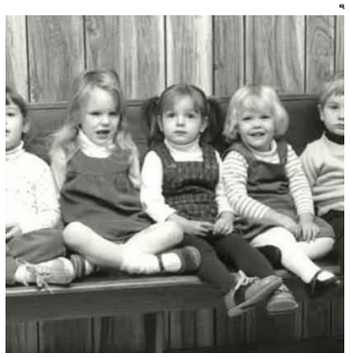
Say in time — teaching effectively is not a piece of cake!

I see the Lay Institute, along with ministries like radio preaching, small groups, male and female specific ministry, and printed Notes ministries as early examples of a new mentality for mobile-spirituality that DTS was delving into. As the culture made more technology available and user-friendly and popular, DTS was not slow to embrace it and make use of it for the ministry of the Word, for Gospel propagation and for encouragement to the outer edges of the DTS community. That movement would expand greatly with an internet presence, video products and now podcasting. The impetus, whether conscious or not, was to explore beyond the

singular work of preaching and simple Bible study. There would be many ways to expose, explore and expounf the written Word of God.

Jocelyn

On December 4th, our wonderful and beautiful baby girl, Jocelyn Charis, arrived at Baylor Medical Center. So many of our classmates were also growing their families and that was part of the DTS community experience. Young moms shared resources and so many area churches were filled with seminary students and their young families. And we have always been proud of our DTS "Baylor baby." For the first six months of her life she lived at 6855 Shadybrook Lane, Dallas, TX.



Daughter Jocelyn as we moved into Dartmouth in 1983 and as she was graduting from high school in 1999 when we were constructing a new facility

Senior Theology with Craig Blaising

This was a class where you felt like you now knew a little bit. The reading requirement, even as a fourth-year student, was still significant. Dr. Blaising was gracious and knowledgeable. His renown as a progressive dispensationalist was still in the future. This class was enjoyable, and I felt like we were being sent with a balanced and mature exhortation to always develop and handle our theology with graciousness and careful scholarship.

Romans with Dr. David Lowery

With a new baby, as many working pool-cleaning hours as I could schedule, and an anxiousness to get on with life, I missed a few of these classes. But Professor Lowery was kind and understanding. I fulfilled the classes requirements and loved studying Romans in a concentrated way in that final semester. Romans is such an important New Testament document and I am glad it received emphasis throughout my time at DTS. Coincidentally, Lowery's church, Waxahachie Bible Church, was my first interview for placement. I remembered Lowery mentioning Dr. Donald Barnhouse's famous ten-year exposition of Romans, completed just before he died. Many years later I was given a complete set of tape recordings of Dr. Donald Barnhouse's exposition of Romans many of which I listened to.

The Thesis

For at least a century, the standard academic degree for clergy in our country has been the Master of Divinity degree, generally accomplished in three years of full-time graduate study with completion of approximately ninety credit hours of classwork and a final research project or thesis. The protocol usually included two years of Greek and one year of Hebrew. DTS's Master of Theology was (and is) a four-year program, allowing for a major field of emphasis—for me it was Historical Theology. It also gave time for three years of Greek and two years of Hebrew. The thesis

was not yet an optional project in the curriculum and that change of graduation requirements occurred in the mid-1990s. But I was excited to accept the challenge. It was good to create an academic writing, as scholarly and credibly researched as I could do. My project was not overly long, but I enjoyed the work of researching, succinctly identifying the focus, and learning the discipline of presenting the document in the prescribed format. My wife Renée was well thought of in her law firm and although she had resigned to have our daughter Jocelyn, she was allowed to access Bryan Tower and the law offices after hours to type my thesis on the Micom. She prepared a crisp and perfect looking original of my "Issues of Polity in English Congregationalism, 1640 to 1670." My advisors were Dr. Edwin Blum and Mr. David Puckett. I received a B plus, better at least than I had performed on Psalm 3!

ISSUES OF POLITY IN ENGLISH
CONGREGATIONALISM, 1640-1670

This thesis is dedicated to Drs. Jack L. Arnold and Edwin A. Blum,
my mentors and friends in the work of the ministry.

A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Historical Theology
Dallas Theological Seminary

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Theology

by
Neil Christian Damgaard
May, 1983

Word Processed by Renée E. Damgaard
On the Micom 2001E in Dallas, TX
Spring 1983

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter
I. THE CONTEXT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY 1
The Context of the Study 1
The Civil War Years 3
The Protectorate Years 5
The Restoration Years 7
The Significance of the Study 8
II. THE ECCLESIOLOGICAL RULE OF VISIBILITY 11
The Principle of Separation 11
The Principle of Fellowship 14
III. LOCAL CHURCH RULE: PRESBYTERIAN OR CONGREGATIONAL . . 18
Presbyterian Rule 20
Congregational Rule 24
The Savoy Declaration 29
IV. RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CONGREGATIONALISM AND PRESBYTERIANISM 34
Owen and Baxter 36
Other Attempts at Cooperation 37
V. CONCLUSIONS 40
The Congregational Advantage 41
The Presbyterian Advantage 41
The American Scene Today 42
The Writers of the Period 42
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY 44

What lay under my selection of this subject would be played out in John Hannah's 2009 book, *An Uncommon Union: Dallas Theological Seminary and American Evangelicalism*, where he discusses the genesis of the independent Bible church movement, as distinct from the more long-standing traditionally fundamentalist movement. I saw in the early English Congregationalists, especially among who were known as the Independents, the seeds of what would become a huge growth in similar churches in the mid- to late-nineteenth century in America. Dallas itself was filled with large Bible churches as were cities like Los Angeles, Chicago, Houston, Seattle, and Orlando. Although I only wrote a forty-four-page thesis, I felt that my point was made, if not verbosely. One fellow student quipped to me, "Your whole thesis, Neil, is the length of my first chapter."

Dr. Blum assisted me also in two other final projects. The Seminary required 2 credit-hours of field education to be authorized and completed under supervision of a faculty member. Dr. Blum was the main teaching elder at Trinity Fellowship where we attended church. He invited me to be on part-time staff as Junior High Minister to fulfill my field education requirement. He also allowed me to complete my last required elective hours in an Independent Study in which he supervised my reading of Calvin's *Institutes* also during my last semester at DTS.[2]

Job Search and Candidating in Dartmouth

By fourth year at DTS we were anxious to get to our place of ministry. I knew that I did not wish the Deep South, and that I had little knowledge or real prospect of placement in the far west. We also hoped to not go where it was so very cold and we were not in a place to seek international work. We hoped for mid-Atlantic placement.

This is an interesting question, philosophically and spiritually. Does God open doors to preferred fields of service? Or should a graduate take on open-ended approach and simply see what job can be secured regardless of location? For married students, how do we factor in the inclinations or preferences of our wives and children? We all thought about this often and discussed the question among ourselves. I don't remember how much we prayed about it but we certainly discussed it.

One afternoon in October, I was on the stairs in the Student Center. I overheard a fellow student, brother of **Dr. Duane Litfin** (a faculty member), speaking of a candidating trip that he had just completed. He said he would not be accepting a "call" which he had been offered. It was in a place called Dartmouth, Massachusetts. I asked him to tell me about the trip. He said it was a small, evangelical Bible church in a missionally hard area of New England, right on the coast. A small congregation, perhaps forty people. They owned a small building and were located across the street from a major university. He said he did not care for their "hippie praise" songs, a thing, actually, which I loved. The fellow student told me that Placement Director **Bob Salstrom** could tell me more about the church. I found Salstrom in his office and he said, "I am scheduled for a phone call at 2 p.m. with one of Dartmouth's deacons. Come back then and I can tell you more."

At 2 p.m., I walked into Salstrom's office, he dialed the phone number for a "Donald Laprade" and handed me the phone. It was an effective if blunt way to introduce a soon-graduate to

a church looking for a pastor. Then began a series of phone conversations over the next few months that led to the invitation to candidate there over Easter weekend, 1983. It would have been nice if the Seminary had made available a seminar or a workshop on the candidating experience. This is as practical an emotional challenge as a candidate for DTS graduation might experience. And with all the talk of coaching and mentoring that was then coming into vogue, some coaching for the interview, contact-making and follow-up protocols would have been well received.

Neither Renée nor I knew anything about Southcoast Massachusetts or New England. The small church family was warm and friendly and seemed desperate to find a permanent pastor. They offered me the job; we prayed about it over a weekend and moved there just after graduation. I would stay for thirty-six years. The congregation grew from forty to about 390 people at its peak. It had been planted in 1963, had employed seven pastors in its first twenty years, and was almost alone in the area as to its independent Bible church identity.

In the years to follow, our church hosted DTS professors and graduates for conferences which included Donald Sunukjian, John Hannah, Jack Arnold, John Reed, and Ron Blue—who we invited back twice. We also hosted my fellow-graduate and great friend, Frank Carmical, who returned many times. We also hosted Dr. Roger Nicole (1915-2010) from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Dr. Dan Verrengia (also GCTS and a Grace Chapel elder), and a great many missionaries and missions' organization representatives over the years.

Commencement

In recent years DTS commencements are held in the facility of Prestonwood Baptist Church. In the mid-1980s it was held at Fair Park in Dallas. The Baccalaureate service was held in Chafer Chapel. In that service I found myself sitting next to **Dr. John Walvoord**, who had never met me before. This would be my single

conversation with him. He asked my name and as I spelled it for him, his comment was, “Oh, just like my name!” I wondered what that meant and he explained, “One first syllable, one second syllable with a double-vowel. Very Scandinavian.” I never forgot that similarity. If nothing else, DTS made one cognizant of linguistic features.

The keynote address for Commencement was given by Dr. E. V. Hill (1933-2003), a famous and thrilling African American preacher and Senior Pastor at the Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles, California from 1961 until his death. Under his leadership, it became one of the largest African American congregations in the United States. A thought-going evangelical, he was also a close friend and confidant of Martin Luther King Jr., whom he assisted in establishing the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.[3] His funeral, which took place at West Angeles Cathedral on March 8, was attended by around 4,000 people.

DTS celebrated Commencement in a great way. It was many things:

- Successful completion of the hard work and determination to receive a graduate degree. It seems that more ThM graduates than not required more than four years to complete the Master of Theology degree, no small accomplishment. Outside of the DTS world, I would learn later that the ThM was a highly respected academic degree in other educational contexts: Princeton, Harvard, and Yale in particular.
- An honor to the wives of married seminarians whose hard work and faithfulness were so essential to the completion of their husbands’ labors.
- The feeling of academic credibility toward being a witness to the Gospel and the conservative view of scripture that we held, and a readiness to take leadership some place in the church.

- A proper pride to our professors, especially to the two or three to whom each of us had become close, even friends. A few faculty friendships would carry into the future.
- The skills we achieved in learning, in a second-nature way now, observation, interpretation, and application as a life-code for handling the scripture.
- Enough familiarity with Greek and Hebrew to engage using the languages (and improving our linguistic acumen) for years to come.
- Celebrating fully, with much joy and aplomb. Honor and congratulation decorated all events th a godliness of which I was proud!

Chapter 6
More on My Student Experience

Going back now, to those four years of classes, chapels, special events, working for the Seminary in my first year, relationships with faculty and fellow students, and watching the campus grow physically, I want to comment on this student's personal experience in a few details.

Plunging into a History

It did not take long to shake off the euphoric feeling of actually being at Dallas Theological Seminary. As mentioned in the Preamble to this book, Renée and I had visited briefly once in 1976 and the campus had an almost mythical feel to us. It was famous in our circles. It was a beautiful place, reminding me a bit of Oz or Camelot: sunny, bright, new-looking, populated by happy and friendly people. Davidson and Stearns Halls, the original two buildings, were situated in the center of campus with Chafer Chapel and two new academic centers as well. The Library was there, impressive, very southwestern in architectural style. Lincoln Hall was nearby and had been annexed. And the Greek

Church stood majestically, still occupied by its congregation but with the DTS student body looking forward to the Greek Food Festival, an annual culinary event. And marvelously the Church would soon be acquired and added to the DTS campus—which has more than doubled in size since our time there. Then, there were also various modest apartment buildings, owned by the Seminary and a few maintenance buildings. Across from the Chapel was a small building for post office boxes and postings of jobs, furniture, cars, apartments, etc. The "Big D" Downtown skyline towered up a mile south, on Haskell Street, always to me watching the Seminary, increasingly touched by our presence.

If a person immigrates to our country, they plunge into our history. If a person joins the US Army, they plunge into that 250-year story with all its traditions, personalities, changes, and challenges. When I entered DTS I felt my entrance into a history that is all its own. You hear about it on the outside, might respect it or honor it or even criticize it. But once on campus I felt like I now owned a small piece of it.

Day-to-day life on campus and off, was tempered by an awareness of a good history into which we had all entered. Since 1924 at its founding by Dr. Chafer, the Seminary had crafted a story. Dr. Hannah's book gives the details, but we heard many stories by those who could still remember early days: Dr. Walvoord, Dr. Evans, Dr. Pentecost, and Prof. Hendricks. The Seminary's growing body of graduates was earning, in general, an honorable reputation. Scandals by graduates were few and far between. Arrogance or an overly dogmatic demeanor were warned against by many instructors and professors. That didn't mean we were immune but achieving a reputation for Christlikeness was important to all, I felt. By the time of my arrival, I had already heard some criticism of DTS from the Reformed community. DTS was only moderately Calvinistic and Oh! for that dispensationalism, I would hear. And from the Pentecostal and charismatic community there was a strangely diminutive

attitude of DTS because of the generally cessationist convictions of most faculty members concerning "sign" gifts. They seemed to murmur, "well, you've only got the initial installment of the Holy Spirit." To the Reformed and to the Pentecostal, it seemed to matter little what *other* good ministries, what sacrifices, what apologetics accomplishments or what significant ministries faculty members were having. DTS's position in the community of Dallas was and is a respected witness. Hence, Dr. Evans's exhortation to us on day-one of orientation.

I always felt like it was not post-VJ Day when clearly "war is over" and all are full of joy. I always felt like somehow we were in a time of armistice, a cease-fire but that war was certainly NOT over for the DTS mission. Our purpose was not inculcated by a mere graduation. We were being launched as trained soldiers into a spiritual conflict. How we would serve, perform, sustain and honor the King was yet to be seen.

That is because our purpose was not merely academic. We were a spiritual body, with a specific spiritual cause. And there were times for all of us when we felt under siege, spiritually. The Seminary would sponsor days of prayer periodically. And whether those made much difference I do not know, but it was the recognition that DTS was a family brought together in the Gospel, equipping one another for Gospel ministry, driven by the Spirit and working to intellectually defend the Gospel. And to defend what we thought to be a balanced theological scheme and hermeneutic of scripture. I rarely encountered much cockiness, open criticism of other seminaries, denominations, or missions' organizations. If the Gospel was spreading, if the Word was being learned and understood, if believers were being encouraged, DTS was happy about it. That was what I saw.

That was really the history, begun by Dr. Chafer, continued well by Drs. Walvoord, Campbell, Swindoll, Bailey, and Yarbrough . . . teaching, maturing, and modeling a balanced world-view and approach to biblical studies and ministry. It was enfolding,

we could see, an increasingly diverse student body from many countries now. DTS was birthing a good history of reasonableness with faithfulness to the Word. A current motto is teach truth love well. I think that captures the heart of DTS well.

By the time of my arrival, Drs. Walvoord, Ryrie, Pentecost, Getz, Hendricks, Hoehner, Ross, Grassmick, Hodges, Merrill, Bodine, Deibler, Toussaint, and Zuck were almost household names as men of pastoral and shepherding acumen and as authors of Bible study materials, commentaries, theological works, and serious biblical research studies. Controversies would come in future years but in 1979 the legacy of the Seminary was largely built on good, solid scholarship, a regular flow of written publications by faculty members, and good ministries by faculty members beyond their roles on Swiss Avenue.

- Gene Getz forged a church-planting model that spread to a number of places around the country.
- Howard Hendricks served as a chaplain for the Dallas Cowboys and then as a much-sought after conference speaker.
- Walvoord, Ryrie, and Pentecost wrote significant works on eschatology and many other subjects. It was probably from them that I caught an early fever to eventually write myself.
- Quieter in reputation, but significant in my years were linguistic and ancient near East scholars, Ross, Hoehner, Grassmick, Hodges, Wallace, Bodine, and Merrill.

Going to Class

Classes at DTS ranged from approximately fifty students in a larger, more basic class, to as few as 7 or 8—whatever enough was to run a class economically, in the more specific electives. In the larger classes, like Bible Study Methods, the atmosphere was cheerful, respectful, and usually with an anticipation that we would be receiving good materiel. In the smaller classes—even

in the language classes—the atmosphere was more collegial and intimate. But there was always a warmth and a good camaraderie between us. This was *not* always the case in my undergraduate days ten years earlier. I do not remember ever having trouble hearing (as I would experience in later years) for all instructors and professors somehow sensed the need to speak with adequate volume. Classes were also always arranged so that any visuals were clearly seen and seating and HVAC issues were never uncomfortable. Class length was either fifty minutes or seventy-five minutes or on special occasions, multiples thereof.

Classes began with a brief prayer, the students did not distract the instructor, questions were usually welcomed, and support was felt between us. Notes were freely shared if one of us missed a class. There were no laptop computers for another two decades or so. So, everyone was writing furiously, and that was an art in itself. I noticed that some of us were particularly artistic in how we took class notes. Others of us wrote illegibly and with less fervor to get every point. As mentioned, most classes were provided with printed Notes and outlines for the day which made the Copy Center a very busy place. I remember wondering what kind of budget was needed to supply so many hundreds of sets of Notes on such a regular schedule. And I wondered if other seminaries provided this as part of their classes?

As for academic performance, it was as in any academic institution: a cumulative grade point average, homework and projects expected to be submitted on time, and graded

accordingly. Illness or accident (I and several fellow students experienced an industrial accident with burning from chlorine gas) were factored into a faculty member's assessment of our trial, but there was little room for coddling or whining. Sick kids and sick wives were sympathized with, but also understood to be the lot of everyone at various times. DTS accommodated human suffering well, but still maintained a high level of expectation for its students for academic integrity. Assignments, papers, projects and final culminating theses and dissertations were evaluated with as much objectivity, careful checking and ethical intolerance for plagiarism as could be imagined. An "A" was something to feel good about; a "C" was a disappointment and lesser ratings were not unheard of.

As for the Seminary dress code, we were required to wear a

coat and tie to all classes, except on Mondays (when there were very few classes held anyway) and later, on Fridays. It was a professional and businesslike expectation, and a rule that I don't remember anyone shirking or rebelling against. Somehow, if you were going to be a DTS student you would find the funding for a proper wardrobe. Although there were only a few female students, as I remember they were always dressed in a dignified way.

Chapels

Chapel was held in either Chafer Chapel or Lamb Auditorium in the new Campbell Academic Center[4] four days/week, Tuesday through Friday. I never minded attending Chapel, although I could imagine others who might have been raised as such or attended colleges with chapels, might resist a bit. Attendance was expected and monitored via a self-reporting card system. A certain number of cuts was allowed and the card was submitted monthly through a post office box in the Student Center. I am not sure how overages were handled as I only occasionally missed, nor reported more cuts than we were allowed and it always seemed like a reasonable number to me.

That is an interesting phenomenon to think about for adult graduate students. Perhaps it was a necessary discipline and none of us suffered because of it, but even now it does seem to me to be slightly rigid. I don't know if DTS still uses this system. In general, I enjoyed Chapel services and I think most of my friends did so as well. Chapel involved:

- Singing a hymn (the "Seminary Hymn" *All Hail the Power*) was always thrilling to sing
- Prayer and any announcements
- Introduction of the speaker; this might be a faculty member or an outside guest who was often a well-known Christian personality, scholar, missionary, or pastor
- A brief message, generally fifteen minutes
- Closing prayer

- Dismissal in time for lunch

The service was carefully kept to its time limit: 40 minutes as I remember. An hour was usually given for lunch and students gathered in pairs or groups in the Student Center (basement of Davidson Hall in my first year) for the meal. Refrigerators and microwaves with vending machines were available. My love affair with coffee began at this hour when I took Hebrew Exegesis after lunch in the summer of 1981.

Special Events

The annual **Griffith-Thomas Lectures** were given over a week of Chapels, four lectures, once per year. It was a single speaker. I remember many well-known scholars who taught. For my years at DTS we heard in:

1979 Edwin M. Yamauchi, PhD – "Archaeological Backgrounds of the Exilic and Postexilic Era"

1980 Raymond C. Ortlund, AB, BD, DD – "A Biblical Philosophy of Ministry"

1981-82 Ted W. Ward, BME, MEd, EdD – "Metaphors of Spiritual Reality"

1982-83 Peter Toon, MTh, DPhil – "Historical Perspectives on the Ascension of Christ"

My wife Renée and I hosted Toon, a gracious Englishman, in our home for an evening. He had written two biographical works on the English Puritan John Owen, in whom I was very interested. He was joined with us that evening by Dr. Hannah.

1983 F. F. Bruce, FBA, DD – "Colossians Problems." Dr. Bruce's *Second Thoughts on the Dead*

Sea Scrolls was one of my first academic titles to read.

There was also an annual **Missions Conference** which hosted many workshops, special messages, and nicely done displays of evangelical missions and ministry organizations.

Orientation and Commencement were also important events. And on rare occasions there were dedications of new facilities. There was also an awareness of the growing presence and reach of the Seminary at remote locations around the country.

And as mentioned before, and of notable interest within the Seminary community, were the regular book sales by publisher, from the Seminary Book Room.

Working for the Seminary

There was a certain pride in working for the Seminary, on the grounds crew. It was hard work and it was not stress-free. The pay was minimal and I moved over to swimming pool service in second year to make more money. But employment by the Seminary was something to feel good about. The grounds were always immaculately kept. Other students served within DTS as couriers, in housekeeping, at the Copy Center, and as audio-visual technicians.

The Church Network in Dallas

Dallas was unique in the country for its very large number of theological seminary students. DTS was joined by Fort Worth's Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and also by Southern Methodist University's Perkins School of Theology amounting to the world's largest body of seminarians in any one metropolitan area. At the time Southwestern was the world's largest theological seminary (founded in 1908) and DTS was the fourth largest. And like most mainline denominational schools, Perkins was small and diminishing in size, founded in 1914.

The feeling among the churches of our theology, so populated by young seminarians, was that you had to stand in line to keep nursery, a comment to which I remember Dr. Ryrie saying, "if you aren't willing to serve in nursery you have yet to learn about servanthood."

But the churches welcomed us all and many of them included DTS faculty members as members or attenders. Churches that were prospering at the time of which I was aware included:

Grace Bible Church, Northwest Bible Church, Garland Bible Fellowship, Reinhardt Bible Church, Scofield Memorial Church, First Baptist Church, Fellowship Bible Church (several), Believer's Chapel (out of which came both Trinity Fellowship and Community Bible Chapel), Pantego Bible Church, Waxahachie Bible Church. First Baptist Church was the mega-church in the city. Watermark, Stonebriar and other large church ministries still lay in the future.

The dual experience of interacting with faculty members both in an academic environment with the expected and normal protocols, and then seeing a faculty member at church—now we were brothers in Christ in a more natural setting, fellow church members and connected even with our wives and children, took some getting used to.

Friendships with Students

Here was one of the most enjoyable parts of being at Dallas Seminary. My fellow students were from all over the world. In my time, enrollment was about 1,300 on-campus students. Online ministries of worship services, classes, degree programs or Zoom meetings were innovations that would come to describe all of higher education institutions in decades to come. I cannot help but believe that with only going to class together, playing pool together, cleaning pools together, attending church alongside each other and studying together, our student experience was less sterilized by the future world of electronic connectivity. As older generations often observe, "life was simpler then."

We went to class, ate lunch together, did class projects in teams together, met for social purposes outside of the Seminary, traveled together, and made many new friends. Our diversity broke up

our regional and ethnic loyalties a bit. That was a healthy thing. Students from Korea did not feel so excited about the NFL. Students from the north were not enthralled with corny-dogs available at Fair Park. Students from California were unimpressed with the surfing skills of their brothers from Miami. Students who were childless were unacquainted with the struggles of their brethren who had one, two, three or more children at home while they tried to study for their classes. Single students living in Lincoln or Stearns had a bit of simpler life, knew nothing of marital stresses or other off-campus challenges. And so we had many wonderful friendships. Somehow what we shared in Christ overruled all the differences, at least some of the time. We shared DTS together for a time, in the community that it was. And we all seemed to love that.

Jim and Lynn Warren

Jim was another of my roommates from Virginia Tech days and Lynn was also a graduate from our alma mater. They were married, and moved to Dallas for Jim to attend DTS as preparation for what he hoped would become a career in film and media. Lynn was a chemist working for Frito-Lay. They were also friends with Stephen Strehle, mentioned earlier. Jim was the first to suggest that I apply to DTS after our visit there in 1976 and they hosted us for that visit. Jim encouraged me that perhaps the Lord would lead with an "acceptance" if I would apply, even though I lacked much confidence towards that end. But when I entered the internship program and made progress discovering my calling, he strongly endorsed my application. Once we arrived, Jim introduced me to Cascade Pool Service and did my initial training. Eventually they had three daughters and we had two. All are achieving, brilliant professionals. I am still friends now with both Jim and Lynn, all of us in retirement.

We were all, I think, hard workers. The work for Cascade could also be hazardous as it turned out. Several of us were exposed to chlorine gas from two drums of contaminated granular chlorine

in an apartment complex. Two of my fellow students were sent to the hospital and I went to the emergency room and underwent pulmonary therapy for chlorine burns in the lungs. We were working students, finding our way, and sometimes in the working world there were risks.

Jim and Angie Brinegar

I met Jim randomly outside the post office at the beginning of Second Year. I learned that he was from Florida, was married to Angie, and they had a newborn girl. He was a painter for income, a Greek enthusiast, and a different personality. I painted with him from time to time on a few jobs to make a little extra money. As with Jim Warren, our friendship included hard physical labor together on occasion. It took us out of the classroom environment and seemed like a healthy dimension to have in a friendship. The Brinegars lived near us in North Dallas and we met with them socially often. Upon graduation Jim took the pastorate of a Bible church in Green River, Utah. From there he joined the US Army and became a chaplain for many years. Angie became a Nurse Practitioner. They had a daughter and a son, who has sadly passed away. We are still good friends and Jim has a small church in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina that is right on the beach. We still pray for each other's daughters regularly.

Jim also invited me to join him on occasion in reaching out in a Sunday nursing home ministry that he had started. I did so, enjoyably, and this occasional joint ministry was another part of our friendship.

The BBG Group

OCTOBER 16, 1950 – MARCH 17, 2006

From our second through fourth years, Renée and I were joined with classmates **Bob Boyd**, **Frank Carmical, Tom Donworth, Gary Allen** (and wife Linda), **David Cottingham** (and wife Susan), and **Steve Cottingham** for our own small group. The idea came from Bob and we affectionately named it *the Bobby Boyd Group* (a.k.a. "The Dallas Seven"). We began in Zane Hodges's Greek class together, and began meeting as a group in our second year, inviting a different DTS professor to dinner each month. David (right) contracted ALS while we still were in DTS and enjoyed a good ministry for a while before he was called home to the Lord in 2006. Bob would marry Mallory, Tom would marry Nancy, Steve would marry Kay, Gary was already married to Linda, David to Susan, and I to Renée. Gary and Linda ministered a full career in Iowa in the Pastoral Ministry—paralleling Renée and I for our whole career in Massachusetts. Frank and Bob became evangelists and Tom enjoyed a teaching career at Nyack College in New York. Steve became an Anglican priest. Our group remains in contact still sporadically and all testify to such a good education and preparation for ministry at DTS.

Tom Donworth, Gary Allen, Bob Boyd (November 1982)

Bob came from a Methodist background and later would earn his Doctor of Ministry degree at Asbury Seminary. Upon graduation from DTS he took the pastorate of a small Methodist church in Schuyler, Virginia—25 miles southwest of Charlottesville. There were two small churches in this village, the other being a Baptist church. Renée and I visited the Boyds there in the summer of 1984. As we learned on that visit, Schuyler was the small town upon which the television show *The Waltons* was based. Bob and Mallory (left) showed us around the real-life sites of "Walton's Mountain." And they took us to meet **Doris Hamner** (1904-1990, the "Olivia Walton" in the television show and mother of Earl Hamner). It was a charming visit and we enjoyed being part of a pot-luck supper in Mrs. Hamner's church, the Baptist church. Conversation with her was a rewarding and fun exercise in distinguishing fact from the fiction to that much-loved American tale. Mrs. Hamner was gracious and clearly thought well of Rev. and Mrs. Robert Boyd. I am happy for

Bob's ministry there, now so long ago. Bob and Mallory continue to minister energetically (2025), here with server Nicol in a restaurant, praying to receive Christ recently.

Sandy Young and Jan Lu Young

The Youngs 1974 and
Sandy preaching the final message in the Dartmouth Bible Church old auditorium

SWBTS student Phil Walker, Sandy, Jan Lu, Renée and young Tommy Frantz
of Roanoke, Virginia in Fort Worth, Thanksgiving 1981

In July of 1970 I met Sandy Young, of Rixeyville, Virginia. He was leading a "counter-orientation" session for incoming freshmen students at Virginia Tech, himself a junior student there. We each came to faith in Christ in our college years and became good friends there. He was best man in our wedding and our friendship grew in our early working years. Sandy worked for a Christian ministry called Son House in Culpeper, Virginia and then came to DTS two years after I began studies. Our wives became friends too,

and we have stayed close through the years. Sandy and I traveled back to Dallas for several post-graduate seminars and symposia. He ministered full-time at Culpeper Christian Assembly for fourteen years and then subsequently did most of his ministry at Blacksburg Christian Fellowship (Blacksburg, Virginia) as a Pastor-elder. The Plymouth Brethren heritage so prevalent with Drs. S. Lewis Johnson, Edwin Blum, F.F. Bruce and a number of Dallas area churches, was also an important part of Sandy's ministry experience. We shared a mutual appreciation for the quality of education we were given at DTS and for various faculty members who impressed us.

He and Jan Lu (above) had four children and after our retirement and relocation back to southwest Virginia we have become good friends again. He invited me to join a small group discussion dealing with current theological issues (facilitated by Drs. Gerald McDermott and Robert Benne), invited me to teach with him in a ministry he began (Blacksburg Biblical Studies Institute), hosts a blog, and we visit and travel locally often. Our time at DTS together left us each with the abiding conviction that we were greatly blessed to receive a fine education at DTS. Pictured above: Sandy and Jan Lu (middle) with Renée, and Phil Walker (left, SWBTS student, Nov. 1981).

We attended undergraduate school together, found the women who would become the loves of our lives, support us in the Lord, partner with us in ministry, relocate with us to Dallas, raise our children, continue to stand by us throughout the many experiences of the pastorate, work in their own careers, find their own ministries, and stay by our sides into retirement. Jan Lu Young and Renée Damgaard should receive far more honor than Sandy and me for their love in Christ and good humor and calling into Kingdom living.

Sandy and Jan Lu and I also travelled to Israel together after DTS in 1997, accompanying Dr. Harold Sevener (1936-2023) of Chosen People Ministries on a study trip that enriched our understanding

of Israel's and the Church's history with many experiences and visits to sites. Chief among these were sitting in the excavated synagogue together on top of Masada, walking across Jerusalem at night and feeling perfectly safe, a visit to Caesarea Philippi (where Jesus asked His disciples, "Who do men say that I am?"), viewing the "conquest level" of the excavations at Jericho, appreciating a long-view down into Syria and towards Damascus, from an Israeli bunker on the Golan Heights, and many sites in Jerusalem including the foundations of the First Temple.

Sandy & Jan Lu Young in the excavated synagogue on Masada

the author and Sandy young on the Sea of Galilee, near Magdala

One small anecdote about friendship and student life: I was given a 1966 Dodge Dart by my Cascade boss, **Clark Reynolds**, to use as a "pool car." It had begun a slow rotting away around the frame because of exposure to granular chlorine. But I drove it for two years before graduating. At that point, I looked at it, and thought, "maybe Sandy could still use it." The driver's door was almost falling off. He was happy to receive it and drove it for another year. Such was the life of sharing among DTS students and long-term brothers in Christ.

Our friendship began in 1970, long before DTS, "doing life" together through DTS and now long since, still enjoying that with which the Lord has blessed us in so many ways.

James Jennings

James was a good friend of both Sandy's and mine in Roanoke when I first entered ministry. He followed us to DTS and stayed for two years before transferring to Talbot School of Theology in La Mirada, California where he completed his Master of Divinity degree. He and his wife, Jeannette, live in Culpeper, Virginia today.

And while he was not a student at DTS, I became good friends with Dallas residents **James Chapman** and his wife, **Jodie**. The Chapmans attended Trinity Fellowship with us and we worked together in that church's youth ministry. James owned and managed a fork-lift motor business. They had three daughters whom I still pray for. They were great friends throughout our time in Dallas and after too for many years. In those years we learned that the Lord provides what we need, when we need it! The Chapmans were that.

Friendships with Faculty

When a new student arrives on campus he wonders if he will get to become friends with any faculty members? Will he get to pick his own mentors? Will they drink coffee together? Will they sit around a barbeque and chat? Will their families meet? Will they have a lasting relationship after Seminary and the official student-teacher relationship concludes? Will a faculty member show any personal interest in his student?

There is a strange paradox at work here. Because we are all Christians, and because we are all studying together some of the deepest things of the Lord, we might expect friendships to be offered. One might hope that since we are brethren in Christ together, our leaders would offer warmth and time to disciple us and even confide in us with some of the things of *their* lives? Talk of theological education is pretty noble and fairly lofty. And one might feel that it is filled with the prospects, theoretically at least, for something akin to what Paul and Timothy had.

I was warned not to expect this, within my first month on campus! My first Systematic Theology instructor was **David Macleod**, a ThD student. He was my instructor for "Theology Proper and Spiritual Life." He accepted my invitation to have lunch together but informed me that the idea of getting close to the more famous DTS professors was a fantasy and not to set my expectations too high. He said that DTS was a place for graduate education, not for an advanced course in Navigators or Campus Crusade discipleship relationships. He also advised getting close to fellow students, focusing on new friendships in whatever church we attended, taking what professors might occasionally offer, realize that likely we would not be in Dallas longer than four or five years anyway and finally, to content myself with those things. It was good advice.

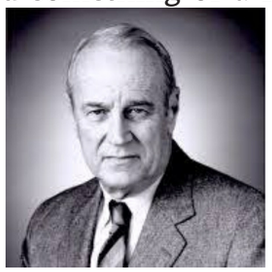
Thirty-eight years later, Macleod contacted me near the end of my time in Dartmouth. He asked me to reach out, with my wife, to a young college student in Boston, who was from his current church in Iowa. He himself had done most of his career at Emmaus University (formerly Emmaus Bible College in Dubuque, Iowa and was raised in Massachusetts). He had dispatched this young woman's uncle to us, who was a warm, friendly Christian man, and we met Katie and gave her fellowship and friendship. What was surprising is that I had not spoken to David in thirty-eight years! **Lesson**: the Lord can bring fruit to a friendship even decades after it appears to have ended.

As mentioned, my primary faculty focus was **Dr. Edwin Blum** (at this writing in his 90th year), as he was my major advisor and the main teaching elder at the church that we attended. He was sought by a good number of students, bore a certain whimsy to him, was highly respected and educated and was a family man with a wife and five children. I would see him occasionally when back in Dallas and while there he was friendly and accommodating. I remember him offering, "if you want to spend time with me, meet me at 5 a.m. and you can jog with me." Well, that wasn't going to

happen and so I was satisfied to find other occasional brief times for conversation.

It was with Blum and Hannah and Hendricks and Diebler that I realized that these men were surrounded by a large and ever-changing fraternity of younger men who wanted only to extract wisdom, insights, confidence, encouragement, family stories, DTS inside information, theological coaching, etc. from them, giving little in return. That must have become tiresome after years of it, I thought. I entertained no delusions of friendship with most faculty, although in later years I would enjoy warm friendship with Drs. Blue, Reed and MacLeod.

Because Renée and I had met **S. Lewis Johnson** (right) in 1977, just as he was leaving DTS and just as I was entering the ministry, I developed something of a friendship with him. We



were introduced to Dr. Johnson by Dr. Jack Arnold, his earlier protégé, and as he was speaking in a conference in our church in Roanoke, I was given the task of spending a day with him in Lexington, Virginia—the home of VMI, Stonewall Jackson, and Washington and Lee University, all in which he was interested.

When we arrived at DTS, and attended Believer's Chapel, Dr. Johnson remembered us and was friendly. He gave me sets of his sermon Notes which were not generally available to the public and occasionally he would invite me to his home for a chat. We exchanged books as gifts. My friendship was of small dimension compared to what I later learned was enjoyed by C. Samuel Storms, a strong student of a somewhat later but serious reputation.

Later still, Dr. Johnson and I corresponded, shared insights and he was interested and supportive of my Pastoral Ministry in New England. He also told me that he felt only smart people read the comics in the newspaper. His favorite at the time, was *Bloom County,* and I would cut out a few examples that I thought he would like and send them to him.

For a few years Dr. Johnson was featured at the John Bunyan Conference in Pennsylvania. My friend Sandy and I attended one of these, and spent a few hours with Dr. and Mrs. Johnson.

I would never be so forward as to suggest that I had anything like a regular friendship with **"Prof" Hendricks**. Born six weeks before my mother, in 1924, and going home to the Lord in 2013, "HGH" is high on my estimation of the greatest Christians I have ever known. With him I took as many of his classes, and later, seminars as I could. I also corresponded with him after graduation. Renée and I showed a supportive interest in the growing ministry of his son, Bill, and we were friends with his daughter, Barbara, through the *Hesed* class at Northwest Bible Church. Professor Hendricks and his wife, Jeanne, had us over one evening to their home for dinner. Later, IN February 1999, I would meet with him when he was speaking in New England. In one very moving event in Boston, where he was speaking at a NE regional DTS Alumni Luncheon, he shared the trauma of just having just two weeks before lost daughter Barbara. As we lined up after his talk to greet him, and I approached him, I had tears in my eyes and said, "Prof, I don't know what to say

except that I love you and feel for this loss so deeply—I have two daughters too." He grabbed me by the sides of my neck, drew me to his chest, hugged me and responded, "I love you too, Neil. Thank you." Graciousness in loss, is one of the truest testimonies of the reality of Christ in someone's life.

In 1994 my church hosted **Dr. John Hannah** (right) for a spring Bible Conference. I drove to Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut to pick up Dr. Hannah who was on a study sabbatical there doing research on Jonathan Edwards. As I found Dr. Hannah in the Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library there, he said hello and handed to me a small piece of paper with tiny handwriting on it, about the size of a 3x5 card. It was part of the original manuscript for *Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God*, Edwards's famous sermon from 1741. He had the small manuscript checked out for the morning and wanted me to see it. As we drove from New Haven, Connecticut to Dartmouth, Massachusetts, Dr. Hannah ministered to me well. My own father had just passed away the previous week. And as I talked about it, Hannah was compassionate, a good listener, and gave good perspective on such a loss. Then, he brought an excellent conference to our church and jointly to a sister church, The First Christian Church of Hixville (begun in 1780). My friend Sandy and I made a point of seeing Dr. Hannah when we were back on campus together. On another occasion, we spent time with him when we were all attending an Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals conference in Atlanta, Georgia in 2006. On that occasion Dr. Hannah confronted R.C. Sproul over some comments the latter had made publicly about Dallas Seminary. We were proud of

our former professor for courage to challenge a national speaker and authority for inaccurate indiscretions. To Sproul's credit, he received Hannah's correction graciously and humbly.

It would be two decades between my early association with **Dr. Donald Sunukjian**, and a renewal of sorts with him. I was in his Pastoral Ministry class in the fall of 1982, my fourth year at DTS. Then, in 1986, he came to my church in Massachusetts for a weekend Bible Conference, at which he taught the Book of Esther. I had no contact with him again until 2005 when I was in the DMin program and had him as instructor in preaching. His content was exceptionally useful, scholarly of course, and a delight to absorb. Having exposure to some of the finest preaching "thinkers" in the nation was a great blessing. But my favorite Sunukjianism was his comment that when you move into a new office and finish the work of shelving your library, "there's nothing like getting those babies up, straightened, and freshly shelved."

Law and Grace

Before I arrived in Dallas, I was hearing about the age-old dichotomy of law and grace. These two ideas both complement and contradict each other. The Law of Moses comes from God. The grace of the Gospel, and the foundational attribute of goodness with God and its outflow in grace, are of the Lord. How can the two duel with each other?

I learned of the controversy from pastors in Virginia, mostly from the Reformed camps. My boss and friend and mentor, Dr. Jack Arnold, spoke often of the classic tension between law and grace. Is the Christian life mainly about rule-keeping? Or is it mainly about the Gospel, living an abundant life, nurturing the fruit of the Spirit, and complying with the Law of Christ (Galatians 6:2b, τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ) as a by-product?

In four years at DTS I do not remember hearing of tension between the law and grace. We certainly thoroughly studied the

Law of Moses, and its various aspects. And we studied the early controversies that the apostles had to think through. But we focused on grace, the Gospel, and its propagation.

The result was that in seminary student life, the Seminary focused on a higher bar than a merely jurisprudential approach. The Seminary practiced grace as far as I saw. When one student was called in to the chaplain and exhorted about how some female staff members were complaining about his looks. he was addressed as a brother and near-professional. He took it to heart and corrected his posture among the female members of the community. When various faculty members were drawn into theological controversies, the student body heard little of it. Things were handled discreetly and carefully as near as we could tell, as befits any ministry championing grace. We had to attend Chapel and classes. We had to pay our bills. We had to abide by parking regulations and the dress code. But I do not remember us ever feeling like we were living under the Law.

I remember Jack Arnold's pronouncement: "A Christian cannot live under the Law." I thought about that. We have many lifestyle rules, protocols, traditions, denominational boundaries, and behavior principles that go beyond what the scripture specifies. But at DTS the feeling seemed to be, "major on what scripture majors on." In all matters we were called to be responsible and as men acting as a good witness for Christ. That in itself should provide much disciple and circumspect walking in life.

This "grace" atmosphere also allowed application of the principle of not taking ourselves too seriously, on occasion. My fellow student, Frank Carmical, is the one who I first heard express it this way: "I take what I am doing very seriously. But I try never to take myself too seriously." I thought that was a great code to live by. I knew a few professors who would model that well. They could laugh. They could see humor in normal living. They could find whimsy in church life. We know we are all in a spiritual battle and that the devil, like a roaring lion, prowls about seeking people to

devour. We know that the world system will consume us if we let it get a foothold in our conscience. We know that our brethren in some places are suffering terrible persecution.

- But we have the joy of the Lord.
- We have a secure destiny in Christ.
- We have all our sins paid for.
- We have knowledge about the end of the age.
- We have a Savior who loves us and "is the same yesterday, today and forever."
- We have the Holy Spirit.
- We have certain spiritual gifts that equip us to make a difference in the church.
- And we have the written revelation of the Word of God in which we have great and powerful confidence as to what it says.

All this should lighten up our attitudes just a bit. For in my experience, evangelicals are criticized sometimes for a too-harsh attitude about life, being too quick to dismiss, patronize or judge; too quick with the ready and simple explanations for why bad things sometimes happen.

So, it was coming to me that even if we are not all going to find great pulpit platforms and will serve humbly with a somewhat limited impact, we can still smile and say, "Isn't it good that we can be used at all?" We should look like we are enjoying the Christian life, not enduring it. That is a balance I saw much of the time in my studies at DTS.

There were in my years many double-doctorates at DTS, a personal philosophy which reveals a most serious determination for scholarship: Allen Ross, Darrell Bock, Harold Hoehner, Edwin Blum, John Hannah, Eugene Merrill, Charles Ryrie, Donald Sunukjian, and, to my knowledge, one triple-doctorate—Abraham Kuruvilla.

My experience at DTS defined me for four years in the ThM

program. I returned to DTS off and on, to complete the DMin program for another four and one-half years. That was a different pace with classes for a week at a time. And also, visiting DTS for conferences and special continuing education opportunities was another kind of access to DTS's ministry. I did the same with various opportunities at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Reformed Seminary (Charlotte) but it always felt like "home" to be back in Dallas.

Chapter 7
Later Post-academic Experiences

After graduation from DTS and being newly installed in Pastoral Ministry, it was an adjustment to a different kind of stress. I did not miss academic deadlines, the continual evaluations of grades, testing of gifts, preaching effectiveness and the clear caste system of faculty and student. But that did not mean stress had evaporated. I had just traded one kind for another kind. Now, as a pastor, I needed to produce two quality sermons per week. I had been trained to a good standard and the bar was always high. But the flock of my church was very different from anything that we were part of in Dallas. It was a small congregation, families, children, mostly locally enculturated and many who had never lived anywhere else. Renée and I were outsiders in every way except spiritually. It took us years to learn and adapt to New England culture and become comfortable there. As I remember it, little was said about acclimation to a new culture while I was in classes at DTS. The underlying assumption always seemed to be, unless we were clearly heading to some foreign field of service, that we would be embedded within a comfortable evangelical place. It seemed like many of my Class of 1983 classmates were hoping and seeking to be placed in the Southwest, or the south. The northeast could be served by graduates of Gordon-Conwell, Capital, Westminster, Biblical, or Philadelphia College of the Bible. No one ever said that, but it seemed to me to be the assumption.

Conferences (Bible and Otherwise)

In my church in Massachusetts, we enjoyed Bible Conferences with Donald Sunukjian in 1986, Dr. Roger Nicole (Gordon-Conwell) in 1987, Dr. Jack Arnold in 1988, Dr. John Hannah in 1994, Dr. John Reed in 2003, and finally three great Missions Conferences with main speaker Dr. Ron Blue in 2008, 2009, and 2010. Bringing Bible expositors to Southcoast, Massachusetts

always felt like such a coup. The region is two-thirds Roman Catholic and despite its Pilgrim and Puritan heritage, its culture in our times is heavily Catholic and immigrant-based. This means that expositional Bible ministry and an evangelical presence was unusual in those towns and cities. What evangelical presence existed was largely Pentecostal or break-off groups from mainline congregations. There were and are a few evangelical congregational churches, and I sought them out and connected our church with them. There were also a few Baptist churches.

Two years after graduation, we were invited to return to Dallas by our former church, Trinity Fellowship in September 1985. I would be the featured speaker, talking for the weekend about "integrating seminary students into church life." Dr. Blum was host and the church elders gave me enthusiasm and publicity for this visit. We were flown into Dallas, put up in a very nice hotel and given use of a rental car. I had brought along a large number of handouts to distribute. I suppose I felt that was the DTS way. It was a good weekend, and we enjoyed our first return to Dallas. One of the elders was an attorney named Chuck Hendricks (no relation to "Prof" Hendricks). He saw that I used printed Notes and gave me, as a gift from his law office, his *Kaypro* desktop CPM computer to take with me, with a *Swintec* bidirectional daisy-wheel printer. It was 1985 and he was just then converting to the first IMB PCs in his law practice. He knew that Renée had spearheaded the conversion of her employer's law office to Micom word processing. It was a great blessing to us for a few years.

Pastoral Intern

In the spring of 1987, I received a phone call from a DTS ThM student named **Guy Lumpkin**. Guy (below, left) was a carpenter by trade with a large construction company called Cianbro, and a New Testament major at DTS. He needed to do a ThM pastoral internship, and would be employed for several months as a bridge carpenter on the Braga Bridge in Fall River, Massachusetts. Could he do a pastoral internship in our church, while working as a bridge carpenter for a season? He had a wife, **Terry**, and a young son, Daniel. Terry was from Maine and Guy was from San Diego and a graduate of Christian Heritage College there. They had met at New Brunswick Bible Institute in Canada. I welcomed him to join me under these circumstances and loved having another DTS couple with us. He and Terry warmed up to our church people, taught classes for us (including a brief introduction to New Testament Greek), preached and ministered as my side-kick for six months.

Guy would graduate, become a valued member of a Bible church, teach classes, and develop a business which became his career. Terry worked as a secretary for Northwest Bible

Church for many years. When back in Dallas—which was for me a frequent occasion--they invited me to stay with them in their home. The Lumpkins exercised wonderful hospitality to me and we remain good friends to this day. As I worked on my DMin, the Lumpkins served as wonderful consultants to what I was learning.

Beloved Missionaries

Our church embraced the ministry of my fellow DTS classmate, **Frank Carmical**. He graduated with his ThM in 1985 and now has given close to forty years of full-time ministry (so far) as an itinerant missionary, evangelist, church planter, discipler, and trainer of national leaders in fifty-two countries on six continents. Frank lived in Russia close to five years after Russian independence, plus worked five years with Dr. Edwin Blum on the Holman Christian Standard Bible and five years part-time earlier with Dr. Art Farstad on *Logos 21*. Over many years Frank preached as a guest speaker and did missions presentations at Dartmouth Bible Church including in the church's AWANA program. He also worked with AWANA for five years across the world championing children's and youth and parents' ministries. He still pastors a small Bible church in Lafayette, Louisiana and is also still involved in overseas missions, including church planting on the island of Mindanao in the Philippines, reaching Muslims in Indonesia and Bangladesh, and starting some of the first national churches among the indigenous First Nation people groups, also called UPG (Unreached People Groups) in Costa Rica, along with trying to finish the OT in the Bribri language of the Bribri people in Costa Rica. Frank is one of so many unsung servants of the Lord and of the Gospel that DTS has been blessed to contribute to their equipping.

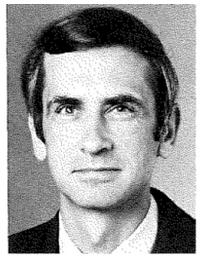
Flowing out of the DTS family, or swirling around it, I am sure there are a great many stories about faculty members—past or present—and graduates that would fascinate our community. Some, I am sure, are heroic. A few might be tragic. DTS of course, is

not more than it is and it is good to keep our academic institution in perspective and context of what is its original purpose. It is not THE church and it is not the CENTER of the church. It has been and is now, a theological seminary. It is not the only seminary that serves the church. The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) reports that it currently accredits and supports more than 270 graduate theology schools in North America.[5] That there are such academic entities is even itself a special interlude within most of church history. But we enjoy the place we have in God's story.

Our stories and the people God has brought to our affiliation are special and they are ours. Other schools and denominations and ministries could report many similar patterns, instructive experiences, and illustrations of their histories. DTS has for 100 years now, focused on good and solid biblical instruction and equipping for Gospel ministry.

Some of the tales of our theological seminaries are purely spiritual, chronicling the advance of the Gospel, discipling within various ministries or journaling of great battles within spiritual warfare. But others are more synergistic, weaving together the spiritual, the personal and even the corporate.

One good ten-year story is special to me. A bit more on **Dr. Edwin Blum.** Frank Carmical, his close associate, gives this brief biographical and professional summary and complementary history of Blum, my favorite professor at DTS. Professors Hendricks, Johnson, Hannah, Wallace, Toussaint, Reed, Blue and others had a good impact in my life, but Blum is who I remember most importantly. Over 100 hours of his teaching, expositional, historical and theological, is still accessible on the Believer's Chapel archive website at https://believerschapeldallas.org/teacher/edwin-blum/.



Upon graduating from Bob Jones University in 1957 Edwin Blum attended DTS, finishing his ThM at Dallas in 1961 (and as a classmate of my first professional ministry mentor, Jack Arnold). He then earned two doctorates, the ThD from DTS (1968) and the Doctor of Theology from the University of Basel in Switzerland (1977). He also had done doctoral work at Rice University in Houston after his ThM from DTS, though he remembered that when he told some academicians at Rice that he studied a course on angels and demons at DTS, they laughed! Subsequently Blum would be the only DTS professor to have taught in four departments: Bible Exposition, New Testament, Systematic Theology, and Historical Theology. His esteem and reputation were impressive.

He and his wife Anne had five children, two of whom are MDs, one a chef, and his daughter Ellen, an assistant producer in Hollywood. Ellen would call periodically while we were working on the HCSB. One day, she was in the limo in Hollywood with Chuck Norris, star and producer of the TV series *Walker, Texas Ranger* and she was one of the assistant producers. Chuck Norris wanted to put a Bible reference into the script and Ellen called her dad long distance to check on its accuracy.

Dr. Blum read at least five books a week and was one of the most well-read people I've ever met. He constantly referenced things he'd read, including a lot of non-fiction. Also, he was a highly disciplined person. During

his days as Executive Editor of the HCSB, he got up at 5 a.m. and worked out at the gym at Baylor in downtown Dallas so he could start preparing for our day of translation in the office at 7 a.m. and the rest of us arrived at 8 a.m. Blum started a 501(c)(3) non-profit called *Philologos*—in Greek, "lover of the word." He built a second story office in his home in Dallas just to be able to devote it to the translation and his other studies.

He started helping full-time with Dr. Art Farstad in the 1980s with *Logos 21*, Art's translation of the Majority Text of the NT into English—the first in history. Art had published that Greek NT with Zane Hodges after Art completed his duties as Executive Editor of the *New KJV*. I had already been helping Art part-time between my mission trips. The only published version of *Logos 21* is a Gospel tract of the Gospel of John called *Absolutely Free*, which I worked on with Art and Zane and others. Over thirty million copies have been distributed for free worldwide.

Lifeway/Broadman and Holman Publishers (the oldest Bible publisher in America—
published King James Bibles in America before the American Revolution) tried three times to buy *Logos 21* because Lifeway wanted to replace the *NIV* Southern Baptist Sunday School literature. Zondervan was exposed as publishing a revision of the *NIV* that had gender-inclusive language, which was eventually republished as the *TNIV*. On the third try, Lifeway bought *Logos 21* for $112,000, which had drafts of all four Gospels, Romans, and Acts finished and a number of Paul's letters and Revelation. I had helped Art

calculate how much of his own funds he'd invested in that project over the four years. But four months after Art signed the contract to sell *Logos 21* to Lifeway, he died. His will stated that all his bank accounts would go to CMML (Christian Missions in Many Lands), a Plymouth Brethren missions organization.

At Art's death, Blum was promoted to Executive Editor of the *HCSB, Holman Christian Standard Bible* and I [Frank] was promoted to his assistant. Ed and I, with a Dallas team of ten people along with four section editors and ninety scholars from different denominations across American and in different countries, plus the publishing crew in Nashville at Lifeway, worked together for five years to publish that translation, which at the time was the first Bible translation to use electronic media to such an extent (of course now, all Bibles are done that way), and the first Bible in history to use the name "Christian."

The HCSB lasted for ten years or so. As soon as Ed finished his duties as Executive Editor of the translation, he went to work on the HCSB *Study Bible* in the same capacity, plus he wrote the study Bible notes on the Book of Romans, which make buying the HCSB Study Bible worth the price just for Ed's notes on Romans! He also wrote a short but nice commentary on Revelation during his years with Lifeway.

In terms of New Testament textual criticism, Ed was a true eclectic, as I am, accepting Greek readings from both the Critical (Alexandrian) as well as the Majority Text. Most people who claim to be eclectic are just Critical text folks because they never truly allow any Majority Text readings. Unfortunately, when Lifeway decided to stop publishing the HCSB after the study Bible was completed, their in-house editors took out all

the distinctives of the HCSB like its use of *Yahweh* in the OT, Majority Text readings in the NT, our modern renderings of time (o'clock) in the NT to the neutral "hour" and many other distinctives. We were disappointed by that but the *HCSB* still exists in millions of published copies that have been sold worldwide as well as still being in Bible software packages like Accordance.

Blum was so committed to accuracy in the HCSB. He even reimbursed me and one other translator to study Hebrew along with him, so we could sharpen our skills in Hebrew for the daunting task of the OT. He got us CDs of a rabbi reading the Hebrew text of the OT so we could listen along and practice reading out loud Hebrew text with the teacher. Another time, he called a contact in Israel who went and looked at a Dead Sea Scrolls facsimile of Psalm 22 to confirm that the Dead Sea Scrolls have "pierced my hands and my feet" in Psalm 22 instead of the Masoretic Text "like a lion." The latter makes no sense, which is either a scribal error or a deliberate forgery, while the Dead Sea Scrolls reading about piercing hands and feet confirms the supernatural prophecy of the Messiah written by David 1,000 years before the birth of Jesus. And of course, the Dead Sea Scrolls are 1,000 years earlier than the Masoretic Text in the Middle Ages.

Blum engaged well-known Christian writer Calvin Miller, who wrote *The Singer Trilogy*, to serve as a stylist in English. He also allowed me a lot of latitude in the HCSB to put in contractions so that even God, Jesus, and angels speak with contractions, which is what it seems they would do if they had spoken in modern English. I think the CSB took out the contractions.

The corporate dynamics of publishing intertwined with the

love of the Word, *Philologos,* with the personalities of Blum, Carmical, and their team. Determination and hard work to finish this monumental project was met with providence, provision of funding, and I am sure the occasional changing of strategies, to produce a Bible and a Study Bible that are worthy of respect and admiration. Frank Carmical told me that the team translated the Gospel of John twenty times, from scratch to arrive at the best possible translation. This would be joined by four separate translation jobs of Isaiah, from scratch. I have two lovely copies of the HCSB as well as the electronic version and a separate file just of the Study Notes. It is a valuable resource for my own study and ministry and I thank Ed, Frank, and their team for the effort.

Other Personalities from DTS

Drs. **Darrell Bock** and **Gary Barnes** were men who attended the same church as did Renée and I (Trinity Fellowship). I was also a good friend of Dr. **Carl Anderson**, pastor of Trinity Fellowship for some years. And Renée and I would meet and befriend Carl's brother, Bob, in Rumney, New Hampshire many years later.

Bock would become a premier Lukan scholar in his studies and publishing (writing 45 books), an established presence in the academic world of biblical scholarship, earning recognition as a Humboldt Scholar (Tübingen University in Germany.) He would also become executive director of Cultural Engagement at The Hendricks Center and Senior Research Professor of New Testament studies at DTS. Bock received his PhD from Scotland's University of Aberdeen and also enjoys the platform of ministry serving as a regular host for the Hendricks Center's podcast, *The Table.* **Bill Hendricks**, "Prof" son, is Executive Director for Christian Leadership at the Hendricks Center. He is a graduate of Harvard University, Boston University, and Dallas Theological Seminary.

Gary Barnes, his wife Cathy, and Renée and I were fellow attendees at Trinity Fellowship in its earliest days, while Gary was a young

DTS faculty member and then received his PhD from Columbia University. He has become a noteworthy counseling scholar, consultant, churchman, and author and I enjoyed a good class on marital counseling from him while in the DMin program.

For years when on a trip to Dallas, I often sought out Carl Anderson for a lunch visit. He was always friendly, supportive, and interested in my Pastoral Ministry and a good confidant for pastoral sharing. Carl was always one of the warmest and most attentive friends that I had in the DTS family.

On one of Professor Hendricks's speaking trips to New England, I took with me—hoping he could get to meet "Prof"—one of my best friends in our church in Dartmouth: Dr. **Dean Schmidlin**, (above on left) would also serve faithfully for some years as an elder in our church. Dean was a Professor of Electrical Engineering and an underwater acoustics expert for the Navy. He was also one of the most purely gifted teachers of the Word I have ever met. His Sunday School classes were brilliantly crafted, winsomely and creatively presented. And Dean communicated a real joy and delight in teaching. As a respected Professor, and as a warm brother in Christ, he was enjoyed, appreciated and esteemed in our church.

His academic training was gained at NYU and he was always hungry to learn biblical material and theology, refine his teaching skills, deepen his understanding of the Christian life, and bless his students and our ministry. An interesting note about Dean:

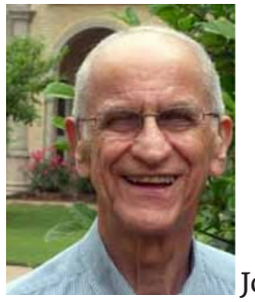
growing up in Manhattan, he remembered attending the Billy Graham 1957 New York Crusade even as a Catholic school student. It was the largest evangelistic campaign in New York City's history. “Prof” warmly met Dean and it was a special moment of my ministry to introduce these two.

The Doctor of Ministry experience and friendship with John Reed

Dr. John Reed came to our church for a conference and a DTS publicity visit in 2002. I had filled out applications twice to Gordon-Conwell Seminary’s DMin program but had never filed them. I shared this with Dr. Reed who said, “Why don’t you come do the DMin with us?” I replied, “Isn’t that kind of lame to go back to my own Seminary for that work?” He said, “I know. Why don’t you do it anyway? We would love to have you.” I agreed and applied for the program. At the same time, my youth pastor on staff with me in Dartmouth was considering seminary. I thought highly of him, saw in him some real gifts for ministry and Dr. Reed (they were both US Army veterans) encouraged him to apply too. Paul did so, was accepted, and made plans to relocate to Dallas. He was married to Christine and they had three children. I knew such a move would be a major exercise in faith and require a significant bit of courage. Paul traveled to Dallas for classes to begin, intending to bring his family to Texas as soon as their home sold. But on the first day of class, he had a fiercely strong urge to abandon the project, packed his clothes into his car, and drove back to Massachusetts. He subsequently began his own business, continued to study the Word and ministry, and serves today as a lay leader and much-loved family member in his home town.

I was disappointed but I have learned that sometimes the Lord leads in uncharted ways. Going to seminary isn’t the goal of the Christian life. Serving the Lord as He leads us, sometimes making adaptations to our sense of His calling, and remaining faithful to our families are vital. Seeking the Lord, glorifying Him, sharing

the Gospel and edifying the body of Christ—these encapsulate the goal of the Christian life.

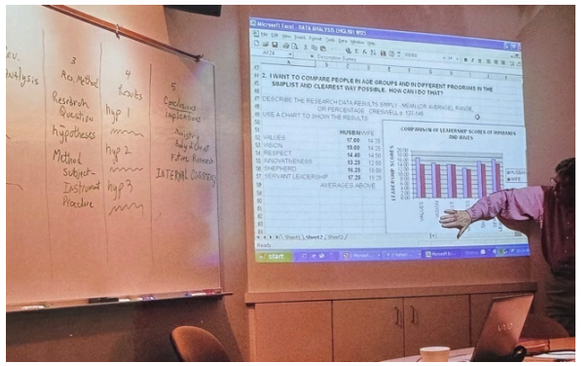


John Reed (left) was also disappointed but he and I became good friends which lasted down to his going home to be with the Lord in 2020. He was not one to whom I was close while in the ThM program. But in the DMin program he coached me closely, and when in Dallas, I always sought him out for a visit and for encouragement. He and I shared a common interest in the Civil War, and he liked to share stories of details and personalities of whom he had learned, especially stories of the Chaplaincies of both the Union and the Confederacy. At graduation in 2008, as he hooded me he said to me quietly, “You did it.” I miss him still.

Dr. Jerry Wofford, the author and Dr. John Reed

The **Doctor of Ministry** experience was a blessing to me in so many ways. I loved every class, even the academic and technical class for preparation for writing the dissertation. I had a wonderful class on Computer Tools for Exegesis with **Matt Blackmon**, the acquisition of a working knowledge of *Logos* was of use to me for the rest of my ministry. A week-long class at Stonebriar Community Church with DTS Chancellor **Chuck Swindoll** and members of that church’s staff was fascinating. I

was using *The Theology Program* in our church with good effect and to meet and spend time with DTS graduates **Michael Patton** and **Rhome Dyke**, on staff at that time at Stonebriar, was a timely encouragement. **Jerry Wofford** taught us and coached us in the structural synthesis of the dissertation with the Harvard model, with a mind to a careful compliance to all standards and guard rails of publishing.



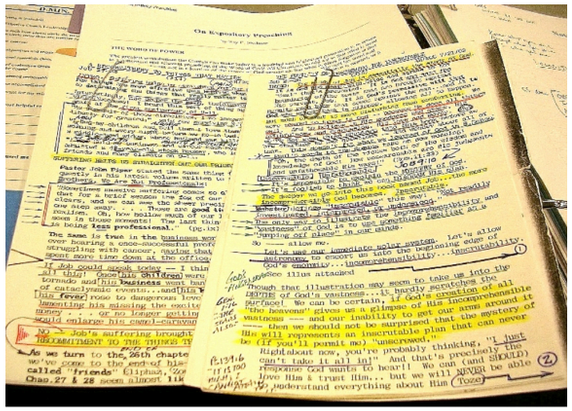
I had met **Chuck Swindoll** (left) previously and although he could not remember my name—he just called me "Massachusetts," in connection with his own first pastorate—he was warm and encouraging in one-to-one conversations. I was

glad he was called, for a season, back to DTS after so many years in pastoral work.

Chuck freely shared his sermon preparation methodology with us and although he did not publish individual sermon Notes as did others, his notes ended up as a large number of very fine books, to name a few:

> *Killing Giants, Pulling Thorns Standing Out, The Strong Family Victory: A Winning Game Plan for Life You and Your Child, Hand Me Another Brick, For Those Who Hurt Strike the Original Match, Three Steps Forward, Two Steps Back Improving Your Serve, Make Up Your Mind, Encourage Me, Strengthening Your Grip, Dropping Your Guard, Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life, Starting Over, Compassion: Showing We Care in a Careless World, Come before Winter, Leadership: Influence That Inspires Living on the Ragged Edge Recovery: When Healing Takes Time, Growing Deep in the Christian Life, Living above the Level of Mediocrity, The Quest for Character, Growing Wise in Family Life, Living Beyond the Daily Grind, Books 7 and 2, Rise and Shine, The Grace Awakening, Sanctity of Life, Stress Fractures, Laugh Again, Simple Faith, Flying Closer to the Flame, The Finishing Touch, The Christian Life for the Kindred in Spirit, Active Spirituality, Paw Paw Chucks Big Ideas in the Bible, Intimacy with the Almighty, Dear Graduate, Man to Man, Hope Again, The Living Insights Study Bible (editor), The Glory of Christmas (coauthor), David: A Man of Passion and Destiny, Esther: A Woman of Strength and Dignity, Suddenly One Morning, The Tale of the Tardy Oxcart and 7,507 Other Stories, Joseph: A Man of Integrity and Forgiveness Moses: A Man of Selfless Dedication, Swindoll Leadership Library, 28 vols. (general editor), Bedside Blessings, The Mystery of God's Will, Perfect Trust Day by Day, Elijah: A Man of Heroism and Humility, Paul: A Man of Grace and*

Grit, Swindoll's Ultimate Book of Illustrations & Quotes, Understanding Christian Theology (coeditor), The Grace Awakening Devotional, Start Where You Are, Job: A Man of Heroic Endurance, So That's What It Means! (coeditor), So, You Want to Be Like Christ? Fascinating Stories of Forgotten Lives, Getting through the Tough Stuff, Great Days with the Great Lives, Great Attitudes!: Ten Choices for Success in Life, Marriage: From Surviving to Thriving, Encouragement for Life, Parenting: Starting Strong, Finishing Well, Wisdom for the Way, A Bethlehem Christmas, A Life Well Lived



Robinson and Kuruvilla

I also had classes with John Trent, **Dr. Haddon Robinson** (right), and Donald Sunukjian, once again. In one humbling incident while in one of the preaching classes with Dr. Robinson, I was in a discussion group with a man I did not know: **Dr. Abe Kuruvilla** (right). He said he was a single man, and I quipped, "Ha. Until you meet Miss Right." He replied, "That is not likely to happen; I am called to remain single." He was (and is) a medical doctor and also possessed two other earned doctorates and was slated to become Senior Research Professor of Preaching and Pastoral Ministries. Single by choice, he also has a special interest in the theology of Christ-centered singleness and celibacy.

One other moment of note while in the DMin program: in the new Student Center Café (the Greek Church) I sat one day eating lunch with **Rick Dodson**, another DMin student. Rick was a pastor in Pennsylvania. As we became acquainted, he told me of his own application (in 1996) to a different church in Pennsylvania. He said his application was graciously declined, "as they already had a good prospect that they were considering." When he told me the name of the church, I sat back, startled. I knew the church! As we

pieced together our timelines, we realized that I was the candidate they had been considering. But after a grueling candidacy there, they did not call me to become their pastor, and Rick informed me that after much discord and conflict, the church had later splintered and greatly declined in the years after I had candidated there, but had called a different pastor. The candidating process there had been exhausting for both Renée and me, and after that we simply gave our whole future over to the Lord once again. If He wanted us to move, He would have to open a door. We were perplexed and in the dark about what had happened. As it was, we stayed in Massachusetts at the same church for another twenty-three years, for a total of thirty-six years until retirement in 2019. The Lord was in it all, and this conversation with Rick was momentous in that though we had no information for eight years about how the church had continued on, we could see that we had been preserved by the providential goodness of God from walking into a bad situation. It was not until *in a random conversation with a fellow DMin student* that we would learn how the Lord had in fact worked.

Rick did his DTS DMin dissertation comparing three church-based Bible institutes, one of which was that in Dartmouth which I created and ran for seven years. Ours was the smallest of three but it was a privilege to participate in his research. As part of his visit with me in Dartmouth for his research, I took him to Providence, Rhode Island to visit the oldest and first Baptist church in the nation, founded in 1638 by Roger Williams.

In later years in my ministry, we invited

Dr. Ron Blue (above) to come to Dartmouth to be our Missions Conference speaker. I had not known Dr. Blue when I was in the ThM program. But clearly, never was an outside speaker loved so much as was Ron by my congregation. He came the next year again, and then a third time the following year. At the end of that ministry, he said to me, "Your congregation gets it. They don't need me anymore." I understood. But we surely needed him when he first came and I needed his friendship.

Professor Blue ministered to me personally, in a time when I was weary and needed shepherding myself. His careful expositions in our pulpit and his warm personality and his passion and experience in missions gave us the impression he really cared about us. I am so glad Ron was willing to come to Dartmouth for three straight years, ministering to our people, growing our sense of missions as a ministry of the local church, and being so gracious to me and my family.

One other aspect of pulpit ministry and DTS's post-academic impact for me deserves mention. It is the **NOTES ministry** that I saw modeled there, and by other DTS graduates, and which I came to develop myself in Dartmouth.

Equipping Pastors International, Inc. Dr. Jack L. Arnold

FIRST PETER
Lesson 1

Introduction to First Peter
1 Peter 1:1

The Epistle of First Peter is simple to understand and very practical in content. Its simplicity does not rob it of its deep spiritual truths, nor does its practicality slight doctrinal substance. This book teaches doctrine but intimately relates doctrine to life. Theory precedes practice and doctrine precedes application. Practically minded Christians should not disparage doctrine or theory, for what we believe as Christians affects how we live. Theory is indispensable. Yet we would have to say that in emphasis First Peter is more practical than theoretical.

As one reads through this powerful but practical letter, he cannot help but be impressed with the commands on living out the Christian life: gird up your minds for action (1:13); keep sober in spirit (1:13); fix your hope on grace (1:13); do not be conformed to former lusts (1:14); be holy (1:15); conduct yourselves in fear (1:17); fervently love one another from the heart (1:22); long for the pure milk of the Word (2:2); submit yourselves to every human institution (2:13); honor all men (2:17); love the brotherhood (2:17); fear God (1:17); honor the king (2:17); servants, be submissive to your masters (2:18); wives, be submissive to your own husbands (3:1); husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way (3:7); let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit (3:8); do not fear (3:14); do not be troubled (3:14); sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts (3:15); arm yourselves (4:1); be of sound judgment (4:7); be sober (4:7); do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal (4:12); keep on rejoicing (4:13); by no means let any of you suffer as a murderer or thief, or evil-doer, or a troublesome meddler (4:17); let him not feel ashamed (4:16); let him glorify god (4:16); let those entrust their souls to a faithful creator (4:19); shepherd the flock (5:2); be subject to your elders (5:5); clothe yourself with humility (5:5); be of sober spirit (5:8); be on the alert (5:8); resist him—the devil (5:9).

THE THEME

The theme of First Peter is "suffering which brings glory to God. "The word "suffering" or its cognates appears 16 times, and the word "glory" and its cognates, appears 16 times. These Christians were suffering for the cause of Christ, and they had to learn that perseverance in suffering brings glory to God.

It is also interesting to note that the words "revelation," "faith," and "precious" occur five times each. The word "hope" occurs four times. Peter has often been called "The Apostle of Hope."

THE AUTHOR

The author is Peter. All the internal and external evidence indicates that Peter was the author. There is no book of the Old Testament or New Testament, which has more

Dr. Jack Arnold had a unique and much-loved ministry of NOTES, publishing each of his sermons, in full-

text form. He had two part-time secretaries who transcribed his original sermon notes, then typed them, then duplicated and displayed them and sometimes mailed them to missionaries as a resource. His method was carefully routine for him, using small notebooks, right side the text of the sermon, left side for Bible verses and illustrations. In the DMin program, we saw Chuck Swindoll's preaching Notes, formed in much the same way. Arnold and Swindoll had been friends at DTS, too. For many years Dr. Arnold's NOTES were available by series, organized carefully and archived alongside his cassette tape ministry. Many of those notes are still available on www.cleartheology.com (created by his son, Dean) as is the amazing story of his final sermon, which as he concluded it on January 9, 2005, he fell to the floor, having died in the pulpit.

Dartmouth
Bible Notes

What Is the Joy of the Lord?

His notes were available for many years and are still valued and used for study. But his mentor in this was, in fact, **Dr. S. Lewis Johnson** who carried out the same kind of NOTES ministry as did Jack, via his church, Believers' Chapel. Those NOTES are also still available at https://sljinstitute.net/ covering many books of the Bible and series given by Dr. Johnson. Dr. Johnson's ministry differed in that the NOTES were mainly available for church attendees only on the morning in which the sermon was preached. It was hard to locate any back-copies later, except Dr. Johnson gave me several series personally. Jack's NOTES were available in whole series, neatly displayed for years. Also, Dr.

Johnson told me that he had learned the practice from the Bible teacher who had led him to the Lord: **Donald Grey Barnhouse**. Also, Johnson's audio sermons of the same expositions are also carefully preserved, digitized and available on the website. I was given a complete set of Barnhouse's exposition of Romans on cassette, which took him from 1949 until 1960 and as he concluded it, he died. I listened to many of those sermons and wove some of his preaching style into my own.

In addition, I learned that **Ray Stedman** (a friend of Jack Arnold and a fellow DTS graduate), from Peninsula Bible Church in Palo Alto, California, the Bible teacher who created *The Discovery Center* for ministry internships, after which my own introduction into ministry was modeled had utilized the same NOTES ministry, and in addition encouraged all his staff pastors to do the same. They were obtainable by mail.

I personally benefited greatly from Arnold's, Johnson's Stedman's and indirectly, Barnhouse's ministries. Finally, I adopted the same ministry from the very beginning of my pastorate in 1983. And in forty years of pulpit ministries, I created over 6,000 pages of full-text sermon manuscripts covering many books of the Bible. I learned it from Dr. Jack Arnold, who along with Ray Stedman had learned it from Dr. Johnson, who learned it from Dr. Barnhouse. Our series were **expositional**, giving comprehensive coverage, explanation, and application from every book of the Bible, and **topical**, covering many subjects in the Christian life and in church ministry. Jack also provided some *biographical* lessons and Notes, from church history. I was the fourth generation of preacher in that one line to feel the leading to minister Bible teaching in this way, integrating ideas and content with print media. I credit DTS with giving us all (except Dr. Barnhouse) the desire to expand and lengthen the reach of our pulpit ministries through providing a written record of every sermon and making them freely available to anyone who wished to use them. And I wonder if anyone at all is doing this today?

It also had the effect of holding each of us somewhat accountable —page by page and word for word—for what we teach. Audio and video recordings can be very porous for this. But once you put it down on paper, publish it, disseminate the text, you cannot take it back. We could not plagiarize. We could not easily fail to properly attribute quotations, citations, illustrations, or historical references. Fact-checking was hands-on. And we did not want it any other way! DTS certainly inculcated the value of high integrity in preparation, delivery, and storage of sermonic ministry. DTS also encouraged us to always be looking for new ways to spread the ministry of the Word of God. I was always very proud of this urgency that was modeled so well by the faculty of the Seminary. We did not need to "bully" people into submission; the Word of God is powerful all by itself.

Other Seeds Planted

Over the years, the creative ways of thinking demonstrated and lived by DTS faculty bore fruit in my ministry beyond my own natural inclinations. Ministry events and activities were pretty traditionally fundamentalist in the first two churches of which we were part: Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday night, and perhaps a Tuesday night visitation program. Media was almost non-existent (other than puppets).

DTS got me thinking outside of those few scheduled avenues into which all of "discipleship" was expected to be engaged. I have already mentioned the Notes ministries that I learned about from DTS men.

The Lay Institute seemed to me to be convertible to local church deployment too. We did this for seven years in Dartmouth, utilizing seminary trained instructors from other churches and advertising our Dartmouth Institute for Biblical Studies **(DIBS)** as widely as possible. I envisioned an appeal among college students since we were 600 yards from a major state university. Over the years we had 103 students, taking classes on Bible and biblically related subject matter. We charged only a minimal fee and I divided up the semester's intake equally among however many instructors we had for a semester.

I did a lot of **guest-speaking** in area churches and ministries. My DTS background was a natural asset in an area so heavily Roman Catholic. I was even invited to speak at a few Catholic events, where normally Protestant clergy were not welcomed. I spoke in area Christian schools, other private schools, to men's groups and at various conference events. I had learned that this is a thing DTS men often find opportunity to use their gifts and training. I credit DTS with the idea of making myself available and of course, for the training and perspective of my education.

Late in my career I was encouraged by a DTS friend to consider beginning a **podcast**. I had been a guest speaker on a couple of radio broadcasts with good effect. I was told I possess a good radio voice and in current culture that translates to podcasting. I created a podcast called *Coffee Break* and produced over 100

podcasts with many guests. We discussed many issues, some biblically related, some historically valuable and some cultural.

- In one podcast, remembering a couple of my DTS professors who interacted with sports teams, I enjoyed a good discussion with a renowned college basketball coach. He had become a friend and knew of our ministry.
- In another, I interviewed a Jewish rabbi with whom I worked on campus. I had been a guest teacher in a few of her classes and her presence for the podcast was uniquely "outside of the box" for a Christian ministry. We were able to speak about the Bible without it being in a confrontational or irenic atmosphere.
- I also interviewed church members on topics of expertise. One church member was a Second World War naval veteran who had been present, at sea, at the kamikazeing of the USS Bunker Hill. He said he remembered the heat. He also viewed Hiroshima from eighty miles distant on board his ship and the crew did not know what they were seeing until it was announced over the ship's PA that an atomic bomb had been exploded. He said he remembered his ship going "hard a'starboard" as they viewed it. His ship was also at anchor in Tokyo Bay and from the deck he and crew watched the Japanese surrender. Another guest was a young US Navy gunnery officer on a destroyer. He talked about the cat and mouse game with a Japanese submarine, and then his boat won the chase. As the submarine surfaced, the crew exited the sub but refused surrender. They all perished under the waves. My friend said that even as they fired off their sidearms in a victory gesture, he was sad. He was a new Christian and was struck by "watching fifty souls go into oblivion." He and his wife had been married by A.W. Tozer, a name I knew well from by DTS years. The podcast was a great blessing to me, the kind of thing that felt DTS-like even though it was years after graduation.

I knew that many DTS professors served on **various boards and councils** for ministries and even for business and civic endeavors. I took that cue and have done so as well. I served on two school boards for Christian schools, as a Trustee for the Northeast Baptist Conference (Converge Northeast), the Roosevelt Junior High School Community Council (in New Bedford), and as Protestant Chaplain for the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth.

In retirement, and prompted by the followers of men like S. Lewis Johnson, Ray Stedman, Tom Constable, and Jack Arnold, I created my own **website** on which to make my resources available freely to a very small but devoted public following. It seemed like the kind of thing DTS people did, and today the Seminary's website is full of good utility. My website is DrNeilDamgaard.com, and I hope to continue populating it with good material for as long as I can.

Finally, we found that more than a few visitors came to our church because they had heard or had networked in looking for a **DTS graduate**. There were a few of us in our region and I was always delighted that a number of people that would become great church members initially came to us because I had graduated from the Seminary.

There were other things we did and other ministries that we had which were very unDTS-like. We discovered how to do things in New England ways and in a heavily immigrant community. We were at a seacoast location, a historic sea port in fact, and within a specific evangelical denomination about which I knew nothing and never heard much about at DTS. But we tried to sense the Lord's leading at every challenge and to give Him the glory for any victory or success too. We tried to wait when He was telling us to wait. And of course those are the same priorities that I found at Dallas Theological Seminary.

In recent years it was a great joy to accompany two different

couples from Dartmouth around DTS in the summer time. Through my involvement with the International Cultic Studies Association (ICSA), I was attending their annual conference in Dallas. With me were **Rev. Bob and Judy Pardon**, also with ICSA and speakers at the Conference. They were glad to have me show them around campus, which was just down the street from the Conference site. Bob is a Gordon-Conwell and Princeton Theological Seminary graduate and Judy a Boston University educator. After my retirement Bob served Dartmouth Bible Church as interim pastor for 18 months. They were favorably impressed with the campus. That same week I was delighted to show my old friends and fellow Dartmouth Bible Church members, then living in Dallas, the campus. **Brendan and Barbara Gahan**, New Englanders, were also impressed with the Seminary "in the flesh." It was a rare privilege and delight to share the Seminary with good friends from New England that had come to mean so much to me.

Chapter 8
Issues Not Addressed

I know that it is not fair nor realistic to expect any four-year training regimen for ministry to cover all aspects of the complicated and ever-changing work of shepherding or evangelism. DTS's mission is well-focused on adequately equipping its students with good tools and skills which will serve them for the full duration of their ministries. And with good spiritual formation, too.

That said, and with no real agenda in mentioning what follows, I ponder several ministry issues that did not get addressed much—or enough to satisfy me—in my time at DTS. When I survey the broad field of challenges that I faced, perhaps it would have been good if someone had at least mentioned some of these challenges while I was at 3909 Swiss Avenue. (As I stated, Dr. Meier's class on Counseling was a rich bed of ideas and strategies which performed as well for me as any one course for preparation for the real world). I would have loved it if at some point, one of the senior educators had said to us:

> There are some issues and some challenges that we don't have final answers for you to absorb. We're struggling with those too and together, we are prayerfully searching for principles and biblical applications on these. Perhaps in years to come you can write a book and bring some new ideas on leadership.

And my memory is not perfect so perhaps some of them did receive some mention. As I see it, here are some issues of importance that I needed to figure out as best I could once I became entrenched in Pastoral Ministry. I am sure West Point, Annapolis, Harvard Business School, and Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine must admit the same challenge. They each only have a limited amount of time to produce great

professionals.

A. Leadership, Authority and Power

Leadership is the exercise of guidance and decision making, utilizing the best resources available, communicating decisions clearly and effectively, setting achievable goals and (for church and ministry purposes) engaging faith in the Lord's presence and providence.

As a pastor, a bit isolated from significant power-sources for encouragement and collaboration in New England, I had to seek out whatever leadership counsel I could find among other pastors and later, denominational District Executive Ministers with whom I became friends.

> In time I would add staff to our church, make many peer-friends of other pastors, affiliate our church with a larger fellowship of churches, battle many challenges to my own authority, protect my family from undue exposure to pastoral isolation, and keep a listening ear to the Lord to the best of my ability. Humility and teachableness were important qualities to value and to practice.
>
> The paradox for us is that our ministries are a nervous alliance of high scriptural and spiritual standards and benchmarks, but driven by and attempted and staffed by individual and team-based humans who are still flawed,

> imperfect in the resources they bring, sometimes given to ego or less-than-noble motivations and easily fatigued. Between my ThM and DMin graduations, I returned to Dallas at every opportunity, on a continuing education basis, to participate in seminars, workshops, symposia, and short-classes on leadership development. From my perspective, **Dr. Bill Lawrence** provided the best instruction on this significant subject. And as important as preaching and sermonic development are, leadership formation would have been a great supplemental focus in which to take some classes *before* my ThM graduation.[6]
>
> The negotiation and dividing up of authority was another topic of which I could have used some orientation. Much has been written on *abuse* of authority, especially in recent years. I was recruited to serve as editor of a book on spiritual abuse, by the *International Cultic Studies Association*. We collected and wove together fifteen scholarly essays (of which I authored two) on the subject and a common issue in most of them is how authority is handled.
>
> With authority comes **power**. It is not a thing evangelicals like to speak about often but it is a real commodity in church and organizational life. Sub-topics of power might be a) influence, b) finances, c) esteem and public recognition, d) deployment of personnel, e) prerogative to set boundaries and affiliations, and f) access to other resources and privileges. I cannot imagine who on the faculty of DTS in my time I would have volunteered to address this subject but I am sure many could have said some things of value to us who were younger.

B. Spiritual Gift Assessment and Sustaining Giftedness Questions

The question of spiritual gifts seemed underserved as to any attention given in my seminary education. It was almost as if the assumptions were:

- You'll find yours if you haven't already
- The controversies because of the charismatic movement are too distracting
- This is the local church's responsibility to work out, not that of the Seminary
- You should have figured all that out before you arrive at DTS

The heat and friction of the greater controversy between Pentecostalism and Evangelical non- Pentecostal churches have been significant. And it isn't an all-or-nothing battle. There are gradations with specific gifts, applications and even definitions, as John Hannah alludes to and chronicles with the stories of some faculty members, in his history of the Seminary (*An Uncommon Union*).

But apart from the controversy about cessation, simply the existence of the "service" gifts, some discussion about their definitions, how to discover and practice their use, and how to create ministry teams with specific gifts present is a good and healthy ministry for a theological seminary to investigate.

Questions:

a. What if a member of the body or a leader gets tired of exercising his or her spiritual gift(s)?
b. Is there a private-version "tongues" for prayer?
c. Does the Holy Spirit invent and instill new gifts in different generations?
d. Is prophecy still extant, in some form?
e. Are there any spiritual gifts that only males or only females possess?
f. Should church staff or larger ministry organizations job-describe these positions in terms of the gifts that an employee would need?
g. How can a church or ministry be protected from disunity over spiritual gifts?

h. Does giftedness ever change or is it static throughout life?
i. How does personal sin affect the exercise of spiritual gifts?

C. Church Discipline

This has to be one of the most unpleasant issues of church life, of official church membership and facing church leaders. I never heard it mentioned in my time at DTS except in the context of two or three very quiet allusions to individuals who had come "under discipline" within their own congregations and then, secondarily, from the DTS administration. And it has seemed to me more open for discussion within the more Reformed tradition churches.

I would have welcomed, even though it is a difficult topic, hearing a few examples of a good process of church discipline from veteran pastors or leaders. When I first met Chuck Swindoll, he had just recently become the new DTS President. In my first sit-down with Chuck, he detailed an example from his church in California that was shattering. It made him shudder, he told me, to remember it but it was highly useful for me to learn from someone who had bravely superintended such a dramatic process. I would face it myself —leadership in such a time—years later. The more famous evangelical leaders who found themselves under discipline have received plenty of press. But it would have been both edifying (as the topic is in fact described in the New Testament) and helpful to receive some general instruction from within the DTS curriculum. Again, this is one small issue that would have to be curated within a demanding curriculum but it is hard to imagine any skill set more important than when this comes up in ministry. At least having talked about it would have been helpful.

D. Autocracy

Here is a timely word today in political discussions. Autocracy: a system of government by one person with absolute power. It has many precedents in history and in some church orders it is the defined polity. This has never been the preferred ecclesiological model as taught by or exercised by DTS representatives. But the phenomena comes up in ministry.

- If a ministry was founded by a powerful individual, often his influence can become autocratic in that ministry as long as he (or his spouse) lives.
- In family dominated small churches, there can be a strong feeling of autocracy.
- In heavily traditional settings (ecclesiastically) the organization's traditions and protocols will often be managed and policed by an autocratic leader or leadership team, allowing no or little variation. I saw this lots among so many Roman Catholic people, not so much among individual priests or nuns as with their bishops.

How does a young pastor or missionary maneuver when there is an autocratic atmosphere? How does he learn tact, timing, and strategy without moving too hastily? How do we show respect for long-standing leaders who have been faithful to the Gospel for decades without enabling power that might mutate into abuse? I never heard this discussed at DTS but certainly saw it and not infrequently in ministry. Does the Bible validate autocracy in ministry in any circumstances? If a gifted founder succeeds at planting a new ministry, is he or she authorized to possess most of the authority? How can autocratic rule be challenged or balanced by other leaders if it has become toxic, especially in independent ministries with little or no organizational oversight?

E. The Emergent Question of Women in Ministry

DTS has certainly made many strides forward in grappling with the place of women in the church, balancing giftedness with proper roles. And perhaps this has been a regular or even curricular consideration in the years since my graduations. My own class had (as I remember) three women students. Now fully one-third of the student body are women.

When I was a DTS student **Mary Seume** (wife of Chaplain Richard Seume) was the de facto chaplain for women. And a few faculty members' wives were present and available for encouragement. There was also a Wives' Ministry organization. But the important questions of women in ministry needed deliberate attention in the DTS curriculum.

In the pastorate a young woman named **Lisa Robinson**, from Providence, Rhode Island, began attending our church. She was a widow and mother of two. I could see in her a love for the Word, a strong ability to read and a big capacity to "do" theology. I suggested that further schooling might serve her well. And I could imagine her studying at DTS. She applied, was accepted, moved to Dallas with her son, and began ThM studies with a focus on systematic theology. She graduated in 2014, soon married a fine man she met who lived in Roanoke, Virginia (a Veterans Administration chaplain) and now Lisa is Executive Director for Local Colors, a non-profit celebrating international cultures represented in Roanoke, promoting inclusion, and building multicultural understanding through events, education, and service. Lisa has also had opportunities to speak at Christian conferences and contribute to various written publications. She and her husband Evan Spencer are happy members of a local Presbyterian church. She had found a denominational home while in Dallas with the PCA.

F. Staffing Issues

As our church grew, we developed need for additional staff. In my thirty-six years there we hired an Associate Pastor, four Youth Directors, a worship leader, two secretaries, two enfolding leaders, a Christian Education Director (who evolved into essentially an Assistant Pastor to me), one maintenance leader, Captain **Mike Holmes**, (a Coast Guard Academy graduate, who had captained a Coast Guard cutter and flew helicopters) and several janitorial associates.

We also developed and empowered several ministry leadership positions which were generally unpaid, other than the budgets with which they were provided for their teams.

In the DMin program I took one class that had become popular in the development of the "X-Pastor" position with Dr. Bill Lawrence, for managing large church staffs. This was interesting but beyond the magnitude of most New England churches. I would have enjoyed a class in developing staff for small to mid-sized churches. This could consider such questions as:

- How to compensate staff; detailing differences between full-time and part-time staff
- How to write and publicize an Employee Handbook
- How to support staff with resources and creativity
- Security considerations, background checks, state mandated reporting
- Encouraging, empowering, and protecting staff family members
- Inter-office protocol between staff, devotions, office space, work ethic
- Interviewing, marketing, hiring and terminating staff

- Continuing education for staff
- Facilitating interpersonal cohesion between staff
- Working with both genders on staff
- Workplace ethics
- Inter-staff promotion protocols
- Sharing up-front (Sunday morning) ministry with staff

A sample grid for decision-making might look something like this:

DECISION TREE FOR ADDING STAFF IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

	4	3	1	2	
a		long-range needs	Single pastor	immediate needs	
b		Support or Ministry?	2nd full-timer	Full time or part time?	
c		Male or female?	3rd full timer	j	Compensation
d		Level of maturity	4th full timer	k	Tenure and contract
				l	Shared with other churches
				m	What degree of doctrinal sophistication
e	Administrative	Youth		n	Education requirements
f	I.T./A.V.	Christian Education		o	Experience requirements
g	Parish nurse	Worship Arts & Music		p	Family status?
h	Interchurch liaison	Discipleship			
i	facility specialist	Evangelism			
x		Missions			
y		College Age			
z		Couples or Singles			

This is probably one of the most common and frequent needs in church growth and decision making. DTS addressed these questions somewhat through seminars and workshops offered to graduates. Giving some attention during the ThM experience would have been helpful.

G. Balancing Dignity and Self-Regard in Gifted Lay Leadership

It is probably a true necessity in every business, educational, military, governmental, civic, and public service organization: understanding the egos of their leaders. But in the church we have a strange chemistry. Most churches are run mainly by lay leaders, perhaps facilitated by a small educated or at least empowered fraternity, "the clergy." The church is driven by mission, creed, and history. It is filled

with gifted members who are usually willing to serve the Kingdom on a growing basis. The Bible hopefully informs us on all doctrine and morality, much on ethics and sufficiently on organization. But still we are tempered by the realities of human personality and psychology. The church has sometimes sought to deny or minimize or euphemize the inevitabilities of human passion. Satisfying ego is a real-life drive from which church leaders are not exempt. The wisest among us recognize this, build in safeguards and boundaries to protect the delicate democratic-like flavor of the evangelical church movement. They accept the existence of this reality in ministry and work to encourage its control by Spirit-filled humility and appropriate affirmation.

I would have loved at least a couple of dispassionate and well-thought-out lectures by a wise Seminary professor about this. By the time I arrived at DTS I had already seen ego percolate and erupt within a few local churches. I wondered at the time: Does this always have to happen? Can not the Senior Pastor control his leaders or model humility with strength for them? And conversely cannot the "session" (the Presbyterian term for the board of elders) control the ego of their pastors?

The exasperating thing is how quickly religious people, in deference to their sense of spirituality, can come to deny that ego has anything to do with aspiration for greater authority or control or even employment. We will quote Bible references in an almost mantra-like fashion to validate a sense of calling or ownership of a right to ministry.

And if that gifted lay leader can assemble around himself (or herself) a platoon of followers and disciples this can magnify the problem of disunity within the ministry body. I even remember wondering when I was in the ThM program what a faculty member might say about that, if they had served in a church position at all?

H. Church Expansion Insights – Multi-site, Online, Mergers

The church has historically been mostly one site, one congregation. That does not preclude the possibility of ancient church bodies relocating from time to time as necessity warranted. But usually the church was thought of as a local entity.

An early exception is the Scrooby-England congregation that relocated, compelled by persecution to move en masse to the Netherlands for several years and then in 1620, on the *Mayflower*, to Massachusetts. Interestingly they left their pastor in the Netherlands, and he never moved to the New World, leaving the early shepherding work to Elder Brewster and his associates. The Plymouth church became legendary and the Gospel spread, alongside the establishment of the Boston Puritan community (1627) and the Rhode Island brethren (1638). The words of the New Testament were even heard among the Native American peoples and some believed and were planted in so-called praying towns.

In 1991 our 1963-founded church merged with an older congregation (begun in 1899) and the marrying of two congregations was accomplished. It was not without stresses, but it was successful. It was a time just before *merging* became almost chic or trendy.

All of that seems so very distant now, in our times. In the past century evangelical church expansion seemed to be an accepted assumption. I never heard it said this way in DTS, but the underlying belief or hope was that "if you are faithful to the Word, your ministry will grow. That growth will result in more churches." The times in which we live account for some of the hungry success we have seen in church growth.

And the arrival of certain gifted thinkers and writers and leaders has facilitated its growth. **Gene Getz** exemplified the desire, the insight, and the wisdom to exploit the hunger of the times into new churches and a whole church network. Others would join him in later years, creating and franchising many new movements: Mars Hill, the Vineyard, The Village, Converge, Harvest, and on and on.

With the arrival of online capabilities, the church presence in our culture grew more. Now, connectivity became the need. Services, Bible studies, small groups, electronic publishing, resources, at DTS the Hendricks Center and other outside-of-the-classroom outreaches were explored with great excitement. The COVID pandemic fostered the introduction of Zoom, and not only small groups but administrative meetings came to own the new technology.

Could the DTS faculty have foreseen any of these happenings? Could they have talked to us about getting ready, or "be careful," or even "the Lord is moving?" Were there any insights among our teachers and professors that the environment for ministry changes every so often? We had learned about the Layman's Prayer Revival of 1858 from Dr. Hannah. We knew about the Navigators and CRU, and then Promise Keepers from Prof Hendricks. We were aware of Christianity showing up in the Dallas Cowboys locker room. Were any of our leaders imagining the future of the church, "should the Lord tarry?"

I remember having lunch with missionary **Don Richardson** (author of *Peace Child*), a keynote Missions Conference speaker at DTS. He impressed me as a forward-looker, one of a few who saw into the challenges that were coming to the church and the opportunities.

I. Assessing Affiliations

I had never been in a denominational church since my

coming to a personal faith in the Lord. In other words, every church and ministry to which I had belonged were independent. DTS was and is independent. Our Seminary seemed to be the default-juggernaut for graduate schools for the independent movement.

In 1994, our church in Massachusetts joined the Baptist General Conference (now called *Converge Worldwide*). It was a nervous decision for me and for our church leaders. I worried about questions like, would it compromise our integrity in any way? Would it diminish our effectiveness for what we believed was the "pure Gospel?" Would it provide for us any benefit? Would it divert financial resources away from our body to some little-known administrative hub?

Other than a few in the Southern Baptist Convention, the Evangelical Free Church of America, and the Christian & Missionary Alliance Church, I knew no fellow students or faculty members who were denominationally affiliated. The Plymouth Brethren assemblies were fiercely independent (and quite proud of it), though loosely supportive in some joint missions' endeavors.

A lecture or two about such deliberations, which have become much more frequent I have learned in recent years, would have been good foresight by faculty thinkers and planners. I still wonder about this "macro," big picture kind of question.

J. Building Programs

I think it would have been fun to have a couple of lectures, at least, available to us on how to build a building—not construction engineering of course—but envisioning, forecasting, planning, and promoting a project in a church environment. We built one and the process took us, in whole, twelve years. It was something I loved, but it was very stressful as well, once construction began. How do you as a leader *decide* that construction is something the Lord would have us to do? How do you staff the project internally? Do you use the design-build process or the more traditional approach of hiring an architect, putting the project out to bid? How do you make decisions about change orders as they arrive? How do you keep the church's focus on its mission throughout the demanding attention that a building project requires? How do you fund the project? How do you make the later decisions that are needed for equipment, interior design, chairs and seating, electronics, photocopying, and parking needs?

K. Fund Raising or Not

Few issues can disrupt a church's focus and even interrupt its

joy like matters of money. Sometimes I even played with the notion, "We were better off when we had little money, a small humble building and little vision for more. Life is here. Life is now. Lord, be among us please . . ." Every leader and church member approaches the subject of money and finance with his or her own assumptions and pre-set convictions.

The Seminary's own history is diverse on this topic. Dr. Chafer held to certain older Plymouth-Brethren-ish standards and later administrators challenged his decisions on occasion.

It would have been good to have heard from some of the more senior churchmen, then later seated as Seminary faculty, about this. A round-table forum would have been well attended, I believe, and provide much food for thought to seminarians, many of whom would face the issue in years to come.

L. Raising and Employing a Music Team

The flavor of church music is an interesting topic for church leaders to think through. And the process of picking, employing, training, mentoring, and sustaining a good music team is always a week-to-week task in church life. It is only occasionally theological, but always an emotional priority because the worship team sets the spirit for Sunday morning so often.

We saw music utilized wonderfully in Chapel and Commencement and Annual Banquet at DTS. The Seminary was blessed with good music leaders and a simple team of musicians. It would have been good to hear from them (more than just musically) on occasion, to speak about music in the church.

M. How Much to Say About Moral Tragedies

Perhaps there was a day when the Seminary and the church

were relatively free of moral failings. But we are beyond such a day now, and were even when I was at DTS. The administration encouraged discretion at all times. But in the case of high-profile failings the question of how much to say, how to say it, and when to curtail the dialog lingered on occasion.

With the advent of social media and fast news dissemination (and gossip), careful and effective communication within a ministry is even more vital. Like hornets, it seems, news tidbits fly around via Facebook, email, chat, text-messaging, TikTok, Instagram and website postings so rapidly it is hard to keep up with a developing issue's credibility and development.

We played a game called "telephone" when I was a youth pastor. Messages are whispered from person to person around a small group and then the original and final messages are compared. It would have been a good exercise to utilize in a DTS class, which would communicate well the power of sharing information.

N. Publishing Protocols

This actually was dealt with carefully and thoroughly in the DMin program as it was anticipated that a number of us would eventually wish to publish our dissertations after graduation. There were certain very definite protocols for propriety and for legal consideration with which we were instructed. But many ThM students do not pursue doctoral education and it would have been of interest to hear some about this while still in the ThM program.

Are writings of students produced while in DTS publishable at a later time? How does a graduate learn about this?

O. Common Sense Insights from Outside the Theological Community

I'm sure we *did* hear plenty of common-sense wisdom and insight from the general working community around Dallas. I certainly learned a lot from my swimming pool experience, and other students I knew would testify similarly who worked in painting, courier service, landscaping, optician work, retail, security, and athletics. But a brown bag lunch forum by area professionals would have been well received by us. We were never so wise we could not benefit from advice from non-seminarian working professionals. Here are a few ideas that I remembered to have learned and processed:

1. Going back to the beginning of this book and the exhortation we heard on day one of orientation from Dr. Evans, the message came to us from the professional community, "Don't be demanding or entitled." That one stuck with me. The subtext seemed to me to be, "it's your privilege to be here; not the community's privilege to have you here."

2. A US Navy lawyer and Auditor and Trustee in our church (Bartholomew Mingola Jr.) said this, which also stuck with me: "It's nice to be nice but it's dumb to be stupid." I've called on that piece of lore often, and given it application in many scenarios in ministry.

3. It was a public school administrator (also with a US Navy background) who I heard say, "When in doubt, wait." He was the principal of an inner city junior high school which our daughter Jocelyn attended and with whom I served for

two years on his Community Council. He made the remark as we envisioned some needed but risky-feeling enhancements to both the school's facility and to its security protocols for student safety. We were all committed to doing anything to support school security. But the ideas being considered involved financial and socially novel program experimentation. His judgment was, "I'm not sure yet. Let's wait and think it through some more." That seemed good to me, and I carried it into my philosophy of ministry for our church, to some extent.

4. Do what you can with what you've got where you are. This was a small newspaper clipping which I taped to my desk lamp and kept it there for thirty years. The clipping ascribed the quote to Theodore Roosevelt.[7] It seemed to me a good strategy to live by. Again, the subtext seemed to be: you can't do everything; you don't have endless resources; you can't be everywhere.

An elective about integrating the wisdom of the world, co-opting and washing it through biblical wisdom, or at least interpreting through biblical wisdom and revelation would have been a very interesting exploration. As evangelical theologians we certainly do not deny the existence of common-grace based extrabiblical insights while we champion and preach the special revelation of the scripture (κήρυξον τὸν λόγον).

P. Voice

Here was an issue that was, in fact, touched on once. During

the sequence of preaching classes we used a "listening lab" in the basement of the Library. We were assigned different sermons to listen to on cassette tape, and required to fill out an evaluation form for each. The process exposed us to different aspects of preaching—public speaking, really. On one of these assignments, we listened to a message preached by S. Lewis Johnson. We were also briefly taught (by Dr. John Reed, as I remember) about breathing while preaching. On the form we were queried as to our reaction to Dr. Johnson's voice, his accent. Was it a distraction? Was it annoying in some way? I remember this because at the time I thought it to be a strange quality to notice and to which the students should be alerted. And since I knew Dr. Johnson and loved his southern, deep voice and his occasionally whimsical manner, it stuck with me. I never heard voice spoken of again in preaching discussions but I remembered that aspect of preaching and took it with me into all my years of ministry, hearing hundreds of other preachers and often noting the accent, volume and feel of the basic voice with which a speaker was equipped. It strikes me as an important element because we all make out livelihoods with our voices, primarily. I am glad to have been made aware of this, even briefly, at DTS.

In summary, DTS provided extraordinary academic and theological preparation for Bible study. It provided a community of like-minded scholars and disciples of Jesus Christ with the same sense of His Kingdom and instilled with a future of serving Him. But DTS did little to prepare me for New England, or my wife for the cross-cultural experience that she had. When we arrived in New Bedford, Massachusetts to a small and independent evangelical church, across the street from a major university, I could

draw upon little with which DTS had instructed me other than the Word of God. I had to find new friends. I got close to other pastors of churches with names like The Pacific Union Congregational Church (founded c. 1855), Mullein Hill Baptist Church (founded c. 1835), the First Christian Church of Hixville (founded in 1780 and whose founding elder, Daniel Hix is buried with his wife in the church graveyard), and the International Church of the Nazarene (founded c. 1950).

We would discover that independency had a certain adolescent feel to it, and that perhaps some kind of healthy affiliation might serve us well. And so, we joined the Baptist General Conference (now called Converge Worldwide) in 1994. Renée was able to pursue a teaching career, beginning with completion of her B.A., then six years in a Christian school (which I helped to found) and then twenty years in public education. Our daughters went through and excelled in the public schools of our city. I don't remember ever hearing any counsel or instruction about school choices for our kids while at DTS, although I am sure the questions were in the minds of our Christian Education faculty.

DTS gave me little orientation about the challenge of thinking through worship and the music that we use for it. I made those explorations on my own, almost like Lewis and Clark forging into the wilderness.

But I keep in mind that no education can really prepare one for a whole vocation's saga, especially just in four years. And the Seminary is still evolving, praying, led by its current administration and with the same commitments and vision held by Dr. Chafer and Dr. Walvoord. We were given tools,

exposure to older men with a tempered sense of how the Lord works, and adequate personal attention so as to get us ready for whatever launch into vocational ministry that we would find. It was enough, as it turned out. And perhaps the best seminary program on the planet!

Chapter 9
Books by Us

DTS has been a hub for the publishing of hundreds of books, thousands of academic and scholarly papers, and countless periodical and magazine articles over the years. Now to these are added countless recordings of sermons, podcasts, lecture series, and video series. The impact of the Seminary for Bible study support and exploring the application of biblical truth to many practical situations is dramatic. This is a frontier that I am sure Dr. Chafer did not foresee. But the Lord has blessed the DTS corporate effect of writing and speaking, and continues to do so, almost beyond keeping track of it all. It may seem like a very short list. I am a reader and my own library at its peak contained 3,400 volumes. Here are the books and resources published by DTS authors from my years, that I read and from which I profited:

LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER
- *Grace* (1922)
- *He That is Spiritual* (1918)
- *Systematic Theology* (1947)

CHARLES RYRIE
- *Dispensationalism Today* (1965)
- *Balancing the Christian Life* (1969)

JOHN F. WALVOORD
- *Jesus Christ Our Lord* (1969)
- *The Rapture Question* (1979)
- *Daniel: The Ket to Prophetic Revelation* (1989)
- Commentary on the Revelation (1989)

THOMAS L. CONSTABLE
- *On Sonic Light* (sonlight.com), his Expository Notes on every book of the Bible

DANIEL WALLACE
- *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (1996)

- The website for The Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts (csntm.org)

EDWIN A. BLUM
- *HOLMAN CHRISTIAN STANDARD BIBLE* (GENERAL EDITOR) – (2010)
- *HOLMAN CHRISTIAN STANDARD* ***STUDY*** *BIBLE* (GENERAL EDITOR)
  - *NOTES ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS*
- *SHEPHERD'S NOTES* – REVELATION (1999)

JOHN D. HANNAH
- *An Uncommon Union: Dallas Theological Seminary and American Evangelicalism* (2009)
- *Intimacy with God: A Practical Guide in Our Struggles* (2020)

DARRELL BOCK
- *Commentary on the Gospel of Luke* (1994)

GENE GETZ
- *The Measure of a Man* (1974)

HOWARD G. HENDRICKS
- *Heaven Help the Home* (1973)
- *Teaching to Change Lives* (1987)
- *Living by the Book* (1991)
- *Iron Sharpens Iron* (1995)

HAROLD W. HOEHNER
- *Herod Antipas*
- *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*

S. LEWIS JOHNSON
- *The Old Testament in the New: An Argument for Biblical Inspiration* (1980)
- *Bibliography for New Testament Exegesis and Exposition* (1976)
- On SLJInstitute.net, his study Notes on his whole preaching ministry

J. DWIGHT PENTECOST
- *Things to Come* (1964)

JOHN REED

- *Triumph Amidst Bloodshed: Civil War Soldiers' Spiritual Victories* (2012)
- *Telling Stories to Touch the Heart* [with Reg Grant] (1990)

HADDON ROBINSON

- *Biblical Preaching* (1980)

ROY ZUCK (editor)

- *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2 volumes (1983)

I have become a book writer now too and although I do not attribute this current occupation of mine with any specific class or mentor from Dallas Seminary, I can say that writing books was certainly modeled for me from our fellowship.

The books and materials I have written:

- ThM Thesis, DTS (1983)

Issues of Polity in English Congregationalism 1640-1670
Available on DrNeilDamgaard.com

- STUDY NOTES

Available on DrNeilDamgaard.com

- DMin Dissertation, DTS (2008)

CASE STUDIES OF THE PLANTING OF SELECTED CHINESE-LANGUAGE EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND
Available on DrNeilDamgaard.com

- ***A History of Dartmouth Bible Church* – The First Fifty Years 1963-2013** (2013)

Available from Amazon.com

- ***Defiance at Cairo*** (2020)

A tribute to my parents based on 100 letters from my father to my mother during World War II Available on BookBaby.com and on Amazon.com

- ***Wounded Faith***, Understanding and Healing from Spiritual Abuse (2022) - published through ICSA, International Cultic Studies Association and available on Amazon.com

- ***Hit-G*** (2023) A sci-fi, military, romance, high-tech, spiritual novel

Available on Amazon.com

- ***A Ghost in August*** (2022)

A time-travel, Virginia based novelette
Available on Amazon.com

- ***Shadows of Ravensworth*** – *Tales of My Neighborhood* (2023)

Available on Amazon.com

- ***The Top Dresser Drawer*** – *Essays of Miscellany* (2024)

Ten special essays, three by LtCol Martin Damgaard and one in collaboration
with retired Federal Judge, the Honorable Samuel G. Wilson

- ***Going Home –*** *A Reflection on Primitive Longings for Home* (2024)

Available on Amazon.com

- ***For the Next Hour*** – (2025)

A Personal Retrospective and Remembrances and Reflections on Dallas Theological Seminary
Forthcoming

- ***For the Love of History*** (2025)

Forthcoming

- ***December Ghost*** (2025)

The second in a series of short time-travel novelettes
Forthcoming

Final Thoughts

Not very many people among all the world's humans have been able to afford the luxury of going away to an esteemed institution of learning, spending devoted time becoming better informed and enlightened. I am aware of this every day. In history whole populations have been relegated to just getting by, hunting, gathering, fighting, surviving. So many have stayed within their own exact cultures.

That was true in Jesus's day too, and the apostle Paul was a rare example of a traveled scholar, recruited to become a religious policeman who got out of his home culture in Tarsus. Then his career was abruptly interrupted and retooled for a new mission. He knew that God was calling him to suffer like Christ and for the Gospel of Christ and for the name of Christ, but he could not have imagined his place and importance in church history.

While none of us at DTS would ever imagine even a fraction of such sterling use by the Lord of us, we all have placed Paul at the center of our theology. His ideas, the revelations he received from the Lord were inspired, God-breathed. And all that most of us had about him—the complete data set--were his thirteen surviving letters and Luke's record of him in the Book of Acts. He is unmentioned in any of the four canonical Gospels and only barely by the apostle Peter, a single time. And yet in God's providence he came to set in place the Gospel, of which he wrote to the Romans that he was not ashamed, for all time. He is joined in complete agreement and collaboration by the other apostles.

We studied Paul at DTS. In detail. We also studied all of the other apostles' writings, the manuscripts which so beautifully dovetail to give us the tapestry of the Gospel record. We studied Moses, David, the prophets, their original tongues, and the history of how their movement has grown. We always had the low hum of the Good News running, even when we had challenging times, demanding classes, and occasional interruptions.

DTS taught us to teach the Truth and to love well. It was more than

a slogan. It was something far deeper than mere branding. I am sure other seminaries feel the same. I could not say whether their graduates feel for them as I do for my school. I did not attend those schools. I am glad I was able to attend DTS and now, fifty years after I first heard of 3909 Swiss Avenue, Dallas, Texas, I give praise to God for the privilege of being there.

And when it is all said and done, it was not the faculty or the traditions that impressed me the most. It was the vision, and the Lord's clear blessing on the role of DTS in the greater cause of the Kingdom for which I give God praise.

ἐν παντὶ εὐχαριστεῖτε· τοῦτο γὰρ θέλημα
θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς.
en panti eucharisteite touto gar thelëma
Theou en Christō Jësoũ eis umas
Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the
will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

First Thessalonians 5:18

FOOTNOTES

[1] In 1986 the Intervarsity Christian Fellowship at the Southeastern Massachusetts University hosted an amazing audio-visual evangelistic presentation entitled *Habakkuk*, utilizing a very complicated and synchronized four-projector presentation. I was able to assist, having become introduced to this kind of technology at DTS.

[2] *Institutio Christianae Religionis* ("The Institutes of the Christian Religion" 1536,1559,1560).

[3] For perspective, my 1975 Virginia Tech Commencement speaker was Senator Sam Ervin and my 2008 Doctor of Ministry Commencement speaker was Dr. David Dockery.

[4] "brown bag" lunches, dubbed for the way many of us brought our lunches from home, were also held here, with occasional special guest speakers

[5] https://www.ats.edu/member-schools

[6] To their credit, DTS has over the years explored providing a kind of "OCS" approach (ref. the US Army's Officers Candidate School) through various short-term cohorts which have focused on leadership development.

[7] Although this quote is widely attributed to Theodore Roosevelt, he credits it, in his *Autobiography*, Chapter IX, to Squire Bill Widener of Widener's Valley, Virginia. (TheodoreRooseveltCenter.org, "Theodore Roosevelt Quotes")

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Neil Damgaard

Neil Damgaard grew up in Northern VIrginia, graduated from Virginia Tech in Industrial Engineering and Operations Research, worked for Naval Sea Systems Command, graduated from Dallas Seminary (twice: ThM and DMin), served as Senior Pastor of Dartmouth Bible Church in Dartmouth, Massachusetts and as Protestant Chaplain for the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth. He is married to Renée (a retired math teacher) and they raised two wonderful daughters, Jocelyn (a patent attorney) and Susanna (a registered nurse). Neil and Renée make their home now in Roanoke, Virginia.

BOOKS BY THIS AUTHOR

Going Home

Exploring the feeling of home

The Top Dresser Drawer

Essays of historucal and family interest, three written by the author's father

Shadows Of Ravensworth

Tales of the author's neighborhood, including the story of the famous Ravensworth estate

A Ghost In August

A time-travel fantasy, back to the author's hometown, in a time of great national trauma, including many noble participants

Hit-G

A Christocentric science-fantasy novel, set in Santa Fe, New Mexico and in Såo Paulo, Brazil

Wounded Faith

Understanding and healing from spiritual abuse, edited by the author including two aricles by him; sponsored by the

Defiance At Cairo

The story of a Wisconsin railroad worker, turned U.S.Army combat engineer, Martin Jens Damgaard and a Tennessee stenographer, Joe Evelyn Porch. They found each other at the beginning of the Second World War, fell in love, courted by letters, found each other again after war's end and made a life together. This story is built around 170 extant wartime letters from him to her, through the army censors and across the sea. Seventy of those letters are included in this book.

A History Of Dartmouth Bible Church: The First Fifty Years (1963-2013)

The story of one church in New England, of which the author was pastor for 36 of its 62 years,

Proof